

Campaign Notes

We are starting this new column as a regular feature of the *PNS*, updating information on campaigns on behalf of either individual prisoners or around prison issues in general. We have usually dealt with campaigns around specific issues, or on well known cases, with articles in the paper. This column will help us to keep our readers in and out of prison up-to-date with current developments in long running campaigns. We will continue to introduce some of the cases with longer articles, and then update the information on a regular basis. This will also allow us to carry at least brief mentions of more campaigns.

The campaigns covered in the column may be for individual political prisoners or P.O.W.s, prisoners from a particular political group or tendency, prisoners from the colonized nations in North America, the struggle to achieve human and civil rights for prisoners, against specific conditions or programs, etc. Our hope is that the gains achieved by prisoners, either individually or collectively, will ultimately be useful to all prisoners in their struggle for freedom.

We hope that *Campaign Notes* can help build the campaigns we cover. And we would like to encourage more such campaigns by showing that, even if they take a long time, it only takes a couple of dedicated people to start them. It will also be a constant reminder that our sisters and brothers behind the walls are not alone.

Dhoruba Bin-Wahad threatened with prison

On Mar/15/90, the conviction of Dhoruba Bin Wahad, a former leader of the Black Panther Party (BPP), was overturned. After 19 years in prison, he was finally released on his own recognizance on Mar/22/90. Now, a year-and-a-half later, Dhoruba faces the possibility of re-imprisonment when the State Court of Appeals in Albany, NY hears arguments on Oct/9/91.

Dhoruba and his attorneys waged a decade-long battle to obtain over 300,000 pages of F.B.I. and New York Police Department documents. These proved conclusively that he had been targeted and later framed because of his membership in the BPP. In Feb/90, the NY City DA's office finally admitted that it had illegally withheld important evidence from Dhoruba during his trial. On this basis, his conviction was overturned. Nevertheless, the NY City DA is demanding Dhoruba's re-imprisonment and appealing this most recent decision.

tion was overturned. Nevertheless, the NY City DA is demanding Dhoruba's re-imprisonment and appealing this most recent decision.

Even though Oct/9th will have passed by the time this is read, it is doubtful that Dhoruba will be free of the threat of being sent back to prison, given the important role he has played in raising awareness of the existence of P.O.W.s and political prisoners in the U.S. For information write to:

Campaign to Free Black Political Prisoners and P.O.W.s in the U.S.
P.O. Box 339
Bronx, NY 10463. (718) 624-0800

Norma Jean Croy

Norma Jean Croy, a Shasta indigenous woman, was arrested along with her brother in July/78 after a shoot out involving her friends and the Yreka police in California. On July/16/78, Norma Jean, her brother Hooty Croy, and some friends got into a scuffle with a store clerk. A police car came onto the scene and gave chase to a car load of "Indians" leaving the scene. The terrified young Shastas fled to the hills where police called for reinforcements. Though the Croys and their friends only had a .22 hunting rifle, and the police were heavily armed, one cop was killed after he shot Hooty Croy in the back as Hooty was checking on his grandmother, where the fire-fight was taking place. Norma Jean was also shot in the back and another man was wounded in the groin as he was trying to surrender.

The cops fired over 200 semi-automatic rounds, the would-be victims only fired six shots. It was clearly self-defense, and racially motivated as well. Yet Hooty was sentenced to death and Norma Jean got life in prison. In 1985, the California Supreme Court finally granted Hooty a new trial. In 1990, he was found not guilty, for reasons of self-defense. Norma Jean however remains in prison after 12 years without any release date.

The campaign on behalf of Norma Jean is focusing on getting the California parole board to recognize Hooty's acquittal on the grounds of self-defense as the basis for parole for Norma Jean who was unarmed during the entire incident.

For information, contact:
Norma Jean Croy Defense Committee
473 Jackson St. 3rd Flr.
San Francisco, CA 94111 (415) 986-5591

Write to:
Norma Jean Croy CCWF B080701
POB 1508
Chowchilla, CA 93610

Resources for Prisoners

One of our companion papers has come out with renewed energy and purpose. *Resistance* wants to focus more on reporting on and analyzing the situation in Canada. Considering how rapidly Canada is changing, this is more crucial than ever before. Anarchists, autonomists and independent radicals in Canada haven't had a forum for debates for a while, so lets help *Resistance* on this. Issue #15 now out, has important coverage of the Native struggle in Canada. Of course, you don't need to be Canadian though to find *Resistance* useful: Free to prisoners. Others \$10.00 per issue. Write to:

Resistance
c/o Friends of Durutti
Box 790, Stn A
Vancouver, B.C. V6C 2N6

One of the classics of the Native/anti-prison movements has just been reprinted. *In Total Resistance*, features writings by Leonard Peltier, Bobby Gene Garcia and Standing Deer. This booklet covers important aspects on both the Leonard Peltier campaign, as well as some of the earlier struggles in Marion. It has also updated information from the previous printings. Copies are \$4.00 U.S. Indigent prisoners, send \$1.00 in stamps. Or wait a month or two for it to be sent through Books for Prisoners. Write to:
Leonard Peltier Support Group
POB 2104
Seattle, WA 98101

Books To Prisoners has been in operation for 11 years. They try to fill requests for specific needs (i.e. dictionaries), as well as books on political information in general. They are conscious of the need to give support to prisoners as well as simply meeting the need for information or reading material. As always, with such groups, patience is required since they deal with 2,000 letters a year. Write:

Books To Prisoners:
Box A
92 Pike St
Seattle, WA 98101

Crossroad: A New Afrikan Captured Combatant Newsletter will be appearing regularly, beginning Nov/91. Subs are \$5.00 for prisoners or \$1.50 for each issue, \$10.00 for others for 4 issues, or \$3.00 per single issue. They need financial support to meet regular production. For this voice of New Afrikan prisoners, write:

Spear and Shield Publications
1340 W. Irving Park Ave., # 108
Chicago, IL. 60613

Prison News Service

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TOM SILVERSTEIN

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Manitoba's Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Condemns Racism In The Justice System

by Jim Campbell

"Canada's treatment of its first citizens has been an international disgrace" was the obvious, but none the less significant, finding of Manitoba's Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, which recently submitted its report to the Manitoba provincial legislature. The report, written by two judges of the provincial court, recommended universal self-government for the First Nations followed by the creation of a parallel but separate justice system for Native people within Canada. The report states that "(i)n almost every aspect of our legal system, the treatment of aboriginal people is tragic. We marvel at the degree to which aboriginal people have endured, and continue to endure, what the system is doing to them. They have paid the price of high rates of alcoholism, crime and family abuse."

The basic statistics gathered in the report are clear enough. Though only 12% of the population in Manitoba is Native, they form half of the prison population. As the report states, "(a) boriginal people who are arrested are more likely to be denied bail, spend more time in pre-trial detention and spend less time with their lawyers, and if convicted, are more likely to be incarcerated." The two judges, one of whom is native, also were clear that native people not only suffered from the outright racists and bigots in the system that processes them but that they are also victimized by the discrimination that comes from the very different values of the two cultures: "It is a system administered by non-aboriginal people. The laws which the courts apply are alien to aboriginal people, the adversarial approach employed by the courts do not reflect aboriginal values."

In the remote northern reserves — and this is true elsewhere in Canada — the whole court, including judge, prosecutor, defense and clerks, flies into a native village to hear criminal cases. Often the defendant speaks little or no English and has minimal knowledge of trial procedures. With spotty translation, and the outsiders anxious to leave as quickly as possible, pressure is put on the defendant to plea bargain, often when they are not even guilty. The situation is little different for the urban Natives.

The Inquiry itself came as a result of two incidents that exposed the racism of the police in Manitoba. In 1971, in the northern lumber town of The Pas, a young Cree woman, Helen Betty Osborne, was kidnapped, raped, stabbed 50 times with a screwdriver and left for dead. Initially, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) investigated only Indian men. The report condemned "the discriminatory and insensitive treatment which some aboriginal people received at the hands of the police" during the investigation. In contrast, because of the race and community status of one of the murderers, the RCMP failed to check out his car properly even though it was the crucial piece of evidence.

The totally inadequate investigation was followed by 16 years of police inactivity even though many people in town knew the identity of the killers. The two judges concluded that racism and racial segregation were partly responsible for the silence of the people which had helped to cover up the crime for all those years. At the time of the murder, movie theaters, bars and even the high school lunchroom were segregated. Eventually, the silence was broken. In 1987, one man was convicted, a second was acquitted, a third testified against the others in exchange for immunity and a fourth was not charged.

The second incident investigated by the Inquiry was the murder of a local Native leader, J.J. Harper, by Winnipeg City police in March of 1988. During the investigation of a car theft, Constable Robert Cross approached Harper, who was walking home late at night, even though he did not remotely resemble the suspect. Harper was killed in a scuffle after he refused to answer questions. The

judges were clear in their report that Harper was initially stopped and then killed for racist reasons. What followed was a total cover-up of the incident. The report concluded that the main purpose of the police investigation into the killing was to blame Harper for his own death, to clear Cross and to protect the public image of the police. Evidence showed that other police officers falsified their notes to protect Cross and that they denied that their guns were drawn even though there was clear evidence to the contrary. Cross was never charged for the killing. The officer in charge of the official police investigation committed suicide the morning he was to testify before the Inquiry.

Neither of these incidents are really that exceptional. After all, the murders of women, particularly if they're Native or black, are often only minimally investigated. And there has never been a cop in Canada convicted for killing someone while on duty. There should be no surprise either in the finding that Native people are victimized at all levels of the justice system, from the investigation of crime and identification of possible suspects to the length of sentence and determination of parole eligibility. The same story holds true whether it concerns Native people across North America, blacks and Asians in Canada's larger cities, people of colour in the U.S., or poor whites across the continent. Race and class are the major factors in determining who goes to prison and who doesn't.

Like most official reports that endorse some radical criticisms of government policy or institutions, this one will be ignored. Some recommendations will be implemented, some officials who had previously been able to ignore the obvious, will have their eyes opened but they will grow discouraged if they try to implement the findings. The information and statistics from the report will be used to increase the credibility of the more innovative people operating within the system and to some of the critics just outside the system. It is quite possible that a major experiment involving a semi-autonomous justice system will be set up. One model is that of the Navajo Tribal Courts in the U.S. where traditional values are incorporated into a court system under Native control to deal with all but the most serious crimes, ie murder, rape, major theft, etc. But so far the official response to the report has been underwhelming.

Just as the justice system has reflected, and does reflect, the racism of the dominant society and the colonial relationship between Canada and the First Nations within it, this report reflects the strength of Native resistance in Canada. The willingness and ability of Native people to interfere with development projects has forced the federal and provincial governments to start dealing with some of the longstanding issues and grievances of the aboriginal people. In Sept/91, the province of Saskatchewan and the federal government signed an agreement with 27 Indian bands to provide \$431 million which would cover the costs of obtaining land to fulfill treaties signed in 1871 and 1910 which were never honoured. And earlier in the summer, the province of Ontario signed an agreement with the First Nations within its borders which would put any further negotiations on a "government-to-government" basis.

But even as various government officials talk about Native "self-government" and the need to settle land claims, the higher courts have been ruling against aboriginal claims. Fraudulent treaties have been upheld. Aboriginal occupation of their territory for thousands of years has been ignored and settler occupation for a hundred years has been given precedence. The Canadian economy is critically dependent upon mining, lumbering and, increasingly, the sale of power from massive hydro-electric projects in the north to the U.S. One job in ten in the economy is linked, directly or indirectly, to pulp and paper and

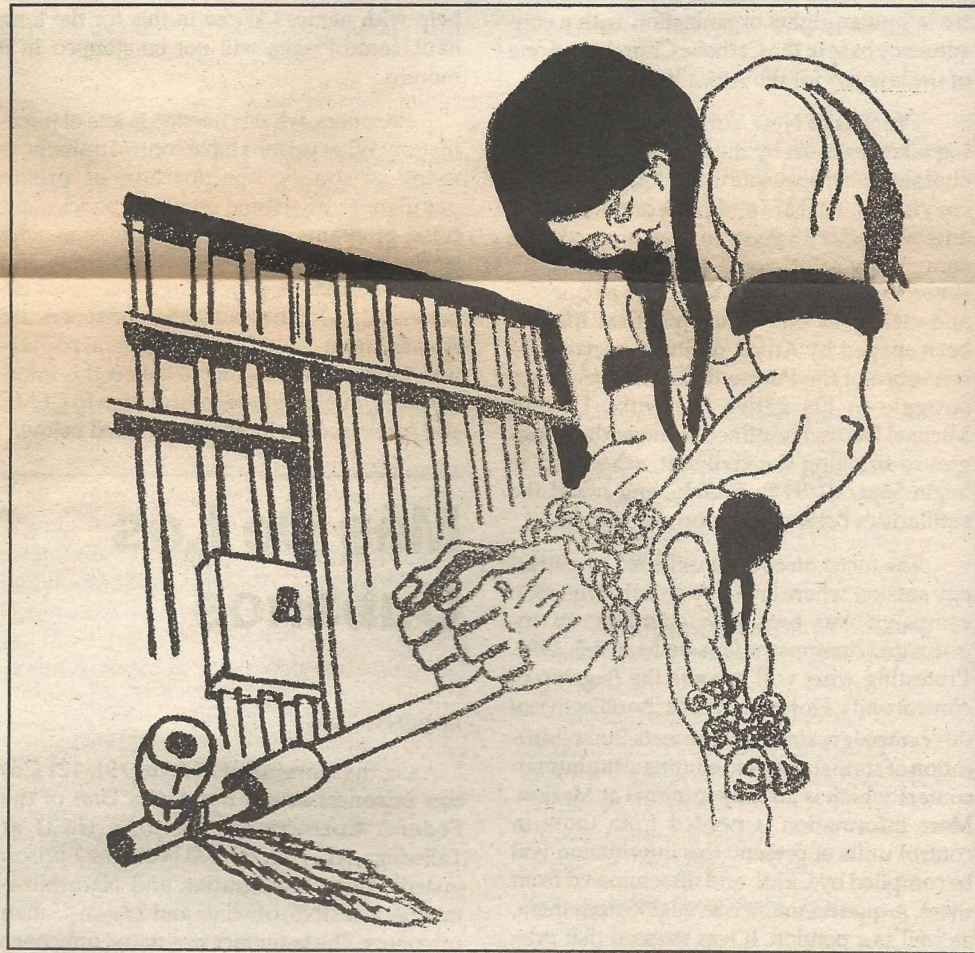
timber. And many more are dependent on mining or other resource extraction, virtually all of which takes place on Native land, or land under dispute.

Business leaders, and the politicians, want land claims settled so that they can continue to clear-cut what little remains of the massive forests. Native self-government sounds good to them if it means that the social problems — petty crime, alcoholism, solvent sniffing, family abuse, etc. — that are the result of the years of colonial dependency become the responsibility of the Native people, while at the same time saving the government money by reducing its obligations to the more autonomous First Nations. But authentic self-determination will never be considered if it means that Native people themselves would decide on economic development. In such a case, the corporations could potentially find themselves excluded from vast areas of the country. It is for this reason that there is support within the circles of official power for "self-government" as a neo-colonial relationship. The First Nations would be granted nominal autonomy such as some control over the administration of justice and various social services and they would receive minimal royalties for the economic activities on their land. Meanwhile develop-

ment would be pushed as quickly as possible while negotiations over land claims are dragged out over several decades. It will take nearly 200 years to settle all the existing land claims at the current pace of negotiations.

In mid-September, the federal government revealed its proposals for a new round of constitutional talks on the future of Canada. It was opposition by the Native people which scuttled the last proposals for constitutional reform, the Meech Lake Accord. The aboriginal leaders were also quick to condemn the new proposals since there would be a ten year delay before the right to aboriginal self-government was written into the Constitution. During this time, the rape and pillage of the land for resource extraction would continue, and probably even be accelerated. By the time self-government was achieved, there would be little left for the First Nations to govern except for cleaning up after the corporations.

Official reports will prevent neither the devastation of native land, nor the imprisonment of large numbers of aboriginal people. Authentic self-determination in which Native culture and values could flourish and grow would go a long way to avoiding both. The government might have a financial interest in reducing the numbers of Native men and women in the prison system. But the economic interests need the resources on Native land to continue their endless drive for production and profits. As long as profit remains the primary goal of the dominant system, Canadian prisons will continue to be filled with Native men and women as though they were just another form of uneconomical garbage. ∞



Court Decision Favours Death

On Sept/26/91, two fugitives, Charles Ng and Joseph Kindler, were extradited from Canada to the U.S., even though they face the possibility of execution. The Supreme Court of Canada ruled 4-3 that returning them to face capital prosecution in the U.S. does not violate their rights under the Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The court also said that as U.S. citizens wanted for crimes committed in the U.S., the men are subject to its justice.

Principled legal behaviour on the part of the Canadian authorities, backed by international law and U.N. Human Rights Treaties, would have required that Canada seek a guarantee that neither of the two men would be executed before handing them over to mercy of mercy of the American courts. An appeal of the two cases before a United Nations Committee has been filed on the grounds that their right to avoid cruel and unusual punishment had been violated.

All that can be said for Ng is that the state shouldn't kill him. He faces first degree murder charges in California for the torture-murders of more than 12 people. He was captured in Calgary in 1985 where he had fled. Kindler was convicted in Philadelphia for the beating death of an accomplice. He escaped before sentencing and was captured in Montreal.

There has not been an execution in Canada since 1962. Capital Punishment was officially abolished in 1976, and twice since then, Parliament has confirmed that decision. In a dissenting opinion, Judge Peter Cory wrote that "(t)he extradition of the fugitive to face the death penalty without seeking assurances that it would not be imposed or carried out shocks the conscience." But apparently, the majority of our Supreme Court Judges have no problem in potentially sending someone to their death. They want to ensure that Canada doesn't become a sanctuary for people fleeing death at the hands of the American state. And to do so they are willing to collaborate in the most barbaric ritual in American society. ∞

Chicago meeting to commemorate Attica

Campaign Against Control Units Begins

Prison activists from many cities and communities met in Chicago on the 20th anniversary of the Attica Rebellion, September 1991. The conference was co-sponsored by the Committee to End the Marion Lockdown (CEML) and the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican Prisoners of War and included three workshops and a showing of the prize-winning documentary *Attica*.

For Bulldozer it was a chance to make and renew contacts so vital to our collective activity, although we were subject to harassment at the Canadian border upon our return. However, as customs officials were on a work slow-down anyway, we decided not to take their thorough search and amazing interest in our literature too personally. (One border guard commented that "we have pictures of these people, ourselves!" upon seeing the faces of political prisoners and POWs on one of the Freedom Now! posters.)

But Chicago was great. Workshops were conducted on the lessons learned about prison organizing since Attica; the true economic and social purpose of prisons; and information on control units in the U.S. Speaking on these topics were people from the Puerto Rican and Mexican independence movements, New Afrikan/Black liberation movements and solidarity activists from CEML, the Quixote Centre (a human rights organization with a constituency base in the Catholic Church) and one of the lawyers for the Attica Brothers.

Officials of New York State are now being taken to court by the Brothers in a \$2.8M civil suit to compensate the families of massacre victims. Akil al-Jundi, one of the defendants who after 13 years in prison is active in community self-defense efforts in the south Bronx where he now lives, spoke eloquently and clearly as one whose political life has been shaped by Attica, noting especially the relevance of the Puerto Rican independence struggle to his native St. Croix. Lawyer Michael Deutsch outlined some of the struggles in bringing the civil suit, scheduled to begin Sept/30/91 in Buffalo, and noted the similarities between Marion and Attica.

The focus on control units led to a strategy session where an eight-month education campaign was begun, to culminate in co-ordinated demonstrations on May 2-3, 1992. Protesting what will become the flagship of control units, Florence, will be the objective of this campaign, since it represents the solidification of state strategy to eliminate the human contact which is already minimal at Marion. More information is needed from those in control units at present: this information will be compiled by CEML and disseminated from there. A questionnaire is available from them, as well as a petition. It was stressed that prisoners should be part of the campaign by whatever means are available to them: from collecting information and stories within control units to forming groups with the intention to participate in the May 2-3 activities, which will vary in scope depending on the location. There is an address-list of groups involved in this campaign at the end of this article.

It was generally agreed by many of the long-time activists present at the conference that we are living in reactionary times: there's no illusion of safety or of being at the edge of a great moment. Our organizing reflects this in the sense that we are fighting as much for long-term continuity as for immediate victories. We are engaged in prison work in that long-term sense, and much of our activism is basic support that would not even need to be done if prisons were actually helping anyone instead of warehousing and exploiting them. AIDS education and literacy are examples of this. In terms of other organizing, we are also fighting specific campaigns, such as confronting the resurgence of right-wing vigilante groups such as the Klan and Operation Rescue; and the racist English-Only movement as it represents the strategy of genocide against a growing

Latino/a population. By present demographics, the year 2050 will see one-half of the U.S. population of Latino/a heritage: Ricardo Romero of the Movimiento Liberacion Nacional-Mexicano noted that the state seems more aware of this than North American radicals.

Overall we were quite revitalized by the weekend, which included a tour of the Puerto Rican Cultural Centre, a very impressive example of community and national self-determination. Even on a Sunday, when staffers were trying to get some work done in peace, we were warmly received. Housing a day-care centre, library, high school and AIDS resource centre, it is a truly remarkable project built entirely with the community's own resources and clearly inspired by the nationalists, political prisoners and prisoners of war, whose faces and statements are everywhere within the beautiful murals covering the building inside and out.

If any of our outside-readers have been wanting to start doing some prison-support work, this would be a good campaign to get in on. You could: write to the group in your area; contact CEML for copies of *Walkin' Steel*, a newsletter designed for the campaign against control units; gather information on your local control unit and/or make contact with prisoners in it. (Bulldozer or CEML may be able to help with names.) We're in this for the long haul, control units will not be stopped in 8 months.

Prisoners, what is needed is lots of information: What prisons have control units; how many prisoners; composition of prison population; official and unofficial policies and rules; programs and privileges; reasons why people sent there, both the official reasons and the actual reasons; psychological changes experienced; what happens after prisoners are released from control units to general population. No one else is going to collect this information for us. Send the information to CEML and/or one of the local groups listed below.

Más De Los Cubanos

by Bill Dunne

On the morning of 21/Aug/91, 121 Cuban prisoners seized the Alpha Unit of the Federal Correctional Institute (FCI) at Talledega, AL. They took 33 hostages: 7 prison guards, three Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) officials and 23 non-Cuban prisoners. The latter fact was noted only once in all the media coverage. The action was precipitated by the Cubans learning that 34 of them were to be deported the next day. Their demands were for an end to deportations and an independent commission to monitor a review by the U.S. Department of Justice of their INS status.

Approximately 270 of the people who arrived in the 1980 Mariel boatlift from Cuba and were released after the Atlanta and Oakdale riots by Cuban detainees in 1987 precipitated changes in the release review procedures, were subsequently arrested for new crimes. Forty-five of this group have died and 50 have been approved for re-release, leaving about 175 who have exhausted all their appeals and who face imminent deportation. The prisoners who took over the Alpha Unit were among this group. According to the deportation agreement, they can be made to serve the remainder of their U.S. sentence in Cuba. They fear mistreatment upon returning to Cuba.

From the outset, federal prison officials were intransigent in negotiating about the



Pelican Bay Information Project
Prisoners Rights Union
1960 Sixth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Bulldozer
Box 5052, Stn A
Toronto, Ont M5W 1W4

Dan Kromer
POB 32761
Detroit, MI 48232

Edna Silvestri
POB 29041
St. Louis, MO 63112

Committee to End the Marion Lockdown
POB 578172
Chicago, IL 60657-8172

Women's Jail Project
POB 1592
Madison, WI 53701

Leonard Peltier Defense Committee
POB 583
Lawrence, KS 66044

Saxifrage
POB 18717
Denver, CO 80218

Edelle Kinsinger
Rocky Mountain Peace Center
POB 1156
Boulder, CO 80306-1156

Rita Martinez
716 West 16th St.
Pueblo, CO 81003

NY3 Freedom Committee
2170 Broadway, Suite 2234
New York, NY 10024

Equal Justice USA/Quixote Center
POB 5206
Hyattsville, MD 20782

takeover. Their only concession was to leave the phone lines open — no real concession, monitored phones being a source of information and mood assessment. The media was kept at long distance and given only official information. When the detainees tried to reach it with banners from the cell-block roof, they were fired upon with gas bombs, injuring four. No food or health care was delivered until early on 29/Aug, after the detainees released a hostage needing medical attention. Later that day, the prisoners allowed medical exams of the nine remaining employee-hostages.

The apparent easing of the situation after a few days was deceptive. During that week, the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) had been assembling a formidable invasion squad. It even imported goons from USP Marion's notorious SORT team and an FBI SWAT group. Preparations, later cancelled, to take some of the hostage holders to Marion were made, and 150 prisoners were transferred out of another Talledega Unit, apparently so deportations would not be impeded by distance. Swine debriefed the released hostage and communicated secretly with the other hostages during the medical exams to set up their assault.

The attack came at 4:00 AM on 30/Aug/91, when swine blew open doors at each end of the unit and took the place back with what they said were only minor injuries to prisoners. The detainees won nothing but to draw brief attention to the injustices still being perpetrated upon them by the BOP. However, by taking other prisoners hostage, isolating themselves from the progressive movement against prison abuses and failing to adequately organize for their action, they allowed their mistreatment to appear justified. Deportations resumed the following week. ∞

Beedaudjimowin is a native magazine that keeps up with the struggles of the First Nations in Canada. The most recent issue, Vol.1/# 4 updates the Leonard Peltier case. A very good paper. Subs in Canada at \$10.00/4 issues, in the U.S., the price is \$15.00. Write:

Beedaudjimowin
263 Roncesvalles Ave.
Toronto, Ont M6R 2L9

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A State of Death, A State of Repression

by Mumia Abu-Jamal

Like the U.S. economy as a whole, the economy of Pennsylvania is in crisis. Facing a deficit of nearly \$1 billion, the state, reeling from failing taxes due to failing or vacating industries, is moving to close schools and hospitals to cut costs. Only one industry appears profitable — prisons. And as schools close, new prisons open; new factories of failure and reservoirs of repression arise.

A January 1991 report* by the Washington, D.C.-based Sentencing Project revealed the U.S. rise in incarceration rates points to a sobering reality — the U.S. now leads the world in incarceration rates, and the people behind the numbers are, more often than not, Black men, at a rate four times that of the rate of imprisonment in South Africa.

Over a million people are presently incarcerated in the U.S. today. Of that incredible number, 2,457 are on U.S. Death Rows, over 130 in Pennsylvania. Two have dates with death, one in June; the other in July. Barring court-ordered stays, judicially-sanctioned state murder of its imprisoned citizens will return to Pennsylvania.

Unless a court orders otherwise, in several short weeks two state prisoners will be shackled to a gurney, tied down, and trained medical staff will place a needle into a vein in their arms in which barbiturate will flow. A plastic line leading from the intravenous invasion can be traced to a secret place, where anonymous executioners sit, awaiting a signal from the prison official.

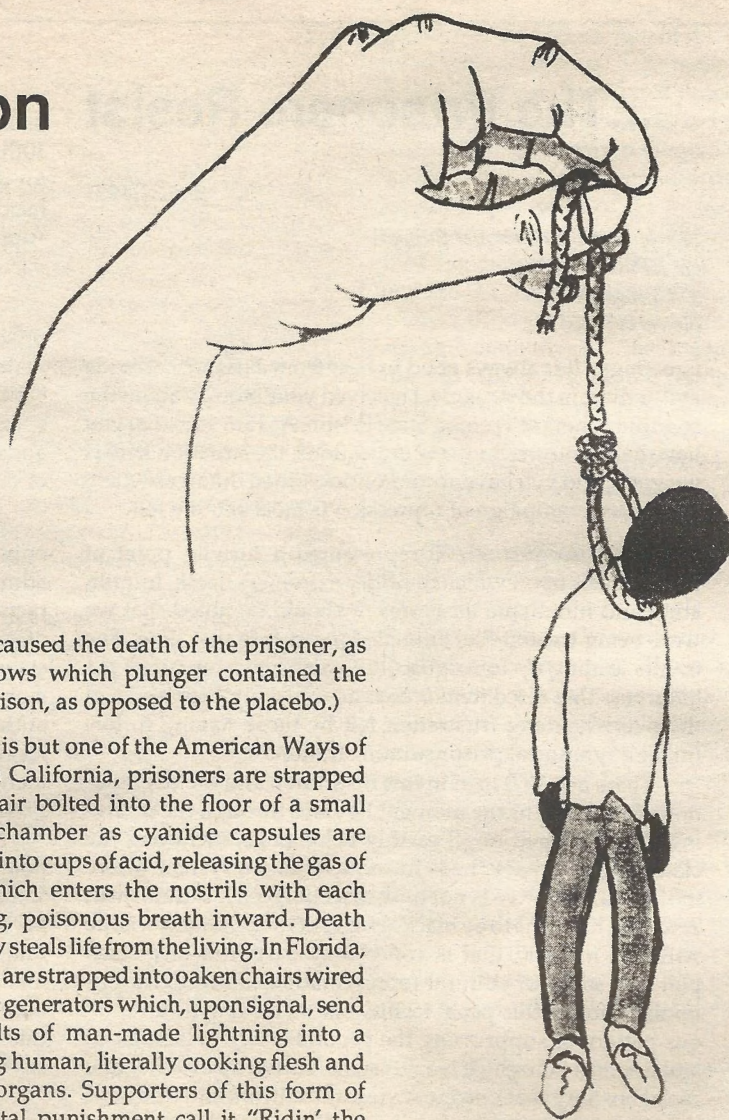
Once given, they will push the plungers, but only one of them will send a paralytic poison coursing through the plastic vein and finally into the human veins. Slowly, painstakingly, the poison paralyzes the limbs, then the organs, the heart, the lungs, and one asphyxiates as lungs turn to stone. Their task done, the executioners will accept their deadly fee, some \$250, and depart into anonymity, their identities masked by the state. (Of the several secret executioners, none knows who

actually caused the death of the prisoner, as none knows which plunger contained the actual poison, as opposed to the placebo.)

This is but one of the American Ways of Death. In California, prisoners are strapped into a chair bolted into the floor of a small airtight chamber as cyanide capsules are dropped into cups of acid, releasing the gas of death which enters the nostrils with each agonizing, poisonous breath inward. Death chokingly steals life from the living. In Florida, prisoners are strapped into oaken chairs wired to electric generators which, upon signal, send 2,000 volts of man-made lightning into a withering human, literally cooking flesh and internal organs. Supporters of this form of U.S. capital punishment call it "Ridin' the Lightning".

Some states, such as, Delaware and Washington, still provide for ancient methods of legalized murder, like hanging from the gallows.

All have been approved by the U.S. Supreme Court as not in violation of the constitution's 8th Amendment, which expressly forbids "cruel and unusual punishment". Whatever the method, the system accomplishes its end by narrowing appeals, disregarding constitutional violations, and rigging results by assuring that only the Poor, never the Rich, mostly the Black, rarely the White,



get to experience the unholy netherworld that is America's Death Row.

For the crassest, most glaring political reasons, thousands of men and women in 36 U.S. states live in hells, stagnating, awaiting death by the government. This then, is the true face of a "kinder, gentler" AmeriKKKa.

June 1991, from Huntingdon Death Row
*Americans Behind Bars: A Comparison of International Rates of Incarceration by the Sentencing Project, ed. Marc Maver. (Also see PNS #31 & #29- Ed.)

Killing The Value of Life

by Paul Jorgesen

The murder rate in the U.S. is continuing to climb and so is the rate of official state executions. Anyone who cares to check the statistics will see that as the rate of state executions has risen since such official murder was revived with Gary Gilmore in 1973, the murder rate has also risen with a lag time of about five years. Lest we think this is a coincidence or anomaly, a check of the statistics for the years 1920 through 1940 shows again that as state executions rise and fall, so does the murder rate with the same lag time.

In a recent survey, when people were asked what the death penalty means to them, 40% agreed with the statement that it means that it is all right to kill people under some circumstances. Coupled with the statistical evidence above, this fact indicates that increasing use of the death penalty is more a stimulus to murder than a deterrent.

Now that the federal government is getting back into the execution business in a big way with a list of 51 new capital punishment crimes in the works, some of which do not involve killing by the transgressor, we can expect the value placed on life by the average U.S. citizen to be lessened correspondingly. This is especially true when, as now, the justice system is not well respected and people feel it won't get justice for them. The constraints on their getting what the government leads them to think is justice with more death penalties for themselves, are loosened by increasing official murder.

Killing begets murder:

Statistical Note: Four of the six states with the most executions are also among the six states with the highest murder rate per 100,000 population:

State	Murder Rate	Rank	Executions Rank
Louisiana	14.9	1	19
Georgia	12.9	2	14
Texas	11.9	4	40
Florida	11.1	6	27

Update on Brazil Kidnapping Case

Two Vancouver activists - Christine Lamont and Dave Spencer - were convicted in the Dec/89 kidnapping of millionaire Abilio Diniz in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Eight others - two Argentinians, one Brazilian and five Chileans - were also convicted in the trial, which ended in May 1990. Appeals to the convictions, which were expected to begin this past winter, have now been postponed until September but, as Dave stated recently, "Adding the Brazilian factor into the equation, August/September probably means sometime before the end of the year, if we're lucky that is!"

Under Brazilian law, "political offenses" receive lesser sentences than those motivated solely for criminal reasons. The maximum sentence for kidnapping is 20 years: in a political case it's reduced to seven. During the appeal process, the political aspects of the kidnapping, in which funds were to be directed towards revolutionary leftist and progressive organizations throughout Latin America, will be re-introduced in an effort to reduce the prison terms, which range from five to 15 years. Christine was sentenced to 8 years and Dave to 10 in solitary confinement in March/91. Dave and the other men in the Penitenciar do Estado were moved out of solitary and into the general population.

The families of Dave and Christine have also begun a request for assistance in returning the two to Canada. Brazilian lawyers are advising the families to use a provision in Brazilian law to arrange for an expulsion and that this requires the "cooperation" of the Canadian state. Letters are now being sent to

the Canadian External Affairs office in Ottawa (see addresses).

Meanwhile, the Brazilian state has also begun trials against five other defendants in two, separate, unsolved kidnappings. In one case against Raimund Roselio and Maria, "the meagre amount of 'evidence'... has completely fallen apart under scrutiny". The other, recently begun, is the 1989 kidnapping of Luiz Sales in which \$2.5 million was paid upon Sales' release. Charged are Humberto Paz, Pedro Lembach and Ulises.

All but three of the defendants in the Diniz kidnapping case pled "not guilty," claiming they were not involved in it and were unaware Diniz was being held. Humberto Paz, Horacio Paz and Raimund Roselio claimed total responsibility in the action, receiving 15 year prison sentences. However, the main defense strategy wasn't aimed at acquittal but in having the trial reclassified as a "political offense." All of the accused were reportedly involved in political organizations and/or political activities relating to revolutionary and leftist groups in Uruguay, Brazil, Argentina and the MIR (Movement of the Revolutionary Left) in Chile. This defense, precariously balanced between non-involvement in the kidnapping and political engagements, was rejected in the 1990 trial on the grounds that any funds realized from the kidnapping would have left Brazil.

The political development of both Dave and Christine can be traced to their involvement in the radical leftist and in particular Central American solidarity groups in Vancouver. Both were involved in the Vancouver El Salvador Action Committee, which Dave helped establish in the early 80s. Dave was also involved in solidarity work with the Vancouver Five.

Their involvement in these struggles, and with the resistance in Latin America (their "guilt" or "non-guilt" not being an issue) stands as an example of real internationalist solidarity. Such solidarity is also demanded from all of us, with Dave and Christine, with all the defendants, and with the struggles in Latin America in which they were involved. **Venceremos! ∞**

Write to the prisoners:

Christine Lamont
Penitenciar do Estado
av. Zak. Narchi 2-366,
Bairro Carandiru,
Sao Paulo, SP, Brazil 02029

Dave Spencer MAT 68.861
Penitenciar do Estado
Av. General Ataliba Leonel 656,
Bairro Carandiru,
Sao Paulo, SP, Brazil 02029

To send letters supporting the Lamont and Spencer families' request for expulsion proceedings, write to:

Barbara McDougall,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
Lester B. Pearson Building, 10th floor, Tower A
125 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2
Fax: (613) 996-3443

Reprinted from Resistance

Special Supplement on Women and Prison

Bulldozer/PNS is seeking submissions (articles, poetry, artwork, etc.) for a special supplement on women's issues. If you are a woman who is or has been in prison, or a women prisoner support activist, we are interested in hearing from you. Topics could include: conditions for women in prison; AIDS; sex and sexuality; family and children; activism; violence against women; sexual abuse in and out of prison, etc. Deadline mid-December 1991.

We apologize for an earlier notice of this supplement giving a deadline of October 1 — it was through a combination of our error and a postal strike that moved the deadline back.

Please send submissions to:

Prison News Service
P.O. Box 5052, Stn. A, Toronto, Ont. Canada M5W 1W4

New Jersey Prisons Repress...

by Jim Campbell

Prisoners at Trenton State prison in New Jersey remain under attack from the administration and the guards. On May 31 and June 1/91, major raids were conducted in General Population. 191 prisoners were seized and transferred into the newly enlarged Management Control Unit (MCU) at Trenton, to the nearby VROOM Readjustment Unit and the new Control Unit at Rahway State prison. Prisoners being transferred into the MCU were charged with being members of a covert organization—the Afrikan National Ujamma (ANU); involvement in a conspiracy to kill or harm prison staff and other prisoners; attempting to disrupt the orderly running of the prison; and being connected with two escape attempts.

During the raids, political material was seized or destroyed as well as anything that could be considered a celebration of the Afrikan heritage of the majority of the 2,300 prisoners in Trenton. Copies of political magazines, including the *Prison News Service*, have “disappeared” without official notification of either the prisoner or the publisher. Ojore Lutalo was even written up for a violation for trying to send out a package of political books and magazines for safe-keeping. (This is like the old days when the power of the printed word itself was enough to send the authorities into a panic.)

Amongst the many changes that have been implemented at Trenton are the building of “dog kennels” inside of the MCU. The MCU prisoners must use the 15'x15' “activity modules” for any activities that take place outside the cell except for outdoor rec. every other day. These include group meals (every fourth day), indoor recreation, haircuts, meetings with counsellors and classes. Even the prison admits that there has been virtually a total boycott of the use of the cages. Security has also been stepped up in the rest of the prison. The yards have been covered with cement, allegedly to prevent prisoners from burying weapons there. Guards in riot gear oversee all prisoner movements. And additional new observation posts have been built in the mess hall.

The prisons in New Jersey have been tense for many years. Things came to a head last summer when several guards and prisoners were injured when black prisoners defended themselves against the constant harassment of the white guards. In response, the prison was locked down for 30 days; 12 prisoners were severely beaten; 68 prisoners were transferred to the MCU; personal possessions were destroyed; several prisoners, considered to be leaders of the ANU, were sent to out-of-state prisons.

The systematic destruction of Afro-centric material in particular and political material in general, shows the consciously reactionary nature of the attacks on black prisoners in Trenton. The inclusion of white radicals and revolutionaries amongst those being subjected to special punishment, such as Tom Manning and Richard Williams of the Ohio 7, only confirms that the events in Trenton are more than just the usual run-of-the-mill brutality of prison guards and staff. The ANU makes it clear that they are not a military movement like the Black Liberation Army. But to the state, black prisoners having an awareness and pride in being Afrikan is a major threat since the goal of prisons is to reduce everyone to being a barely functioning individual who is much too weak and isolated to do anything but meekly follow orders. So the ANU is attacked for what it represents—the refusal of black prisoners to submit to the racist regime within the New Jersey prisons.

Last issue, in our story about Hatari waHaki being arrested for possession of escape tools, we neglected to mention that he was sentenced to 15 days in the hole and another year lock-up on the charges. The prison claimed that waHaki was preparing a mass escape from the VROOM adjustment unit this past May. Over thirty other prisoners from the VROOM, both ANU and BLA members, were transferred to a lock-up unit at Rahway, an extremely racist and brutal unit where two prisoners have been killed in the last couple of years by the pigs.

Three prisoners to write are:

Hatari waHaki SP 78901
Ojore N. Lutalo #59860
Tom Manning #202873

CN-861

Trenton, NJ 08625 ∞

.....The Prisoners Resist

July 31/1991

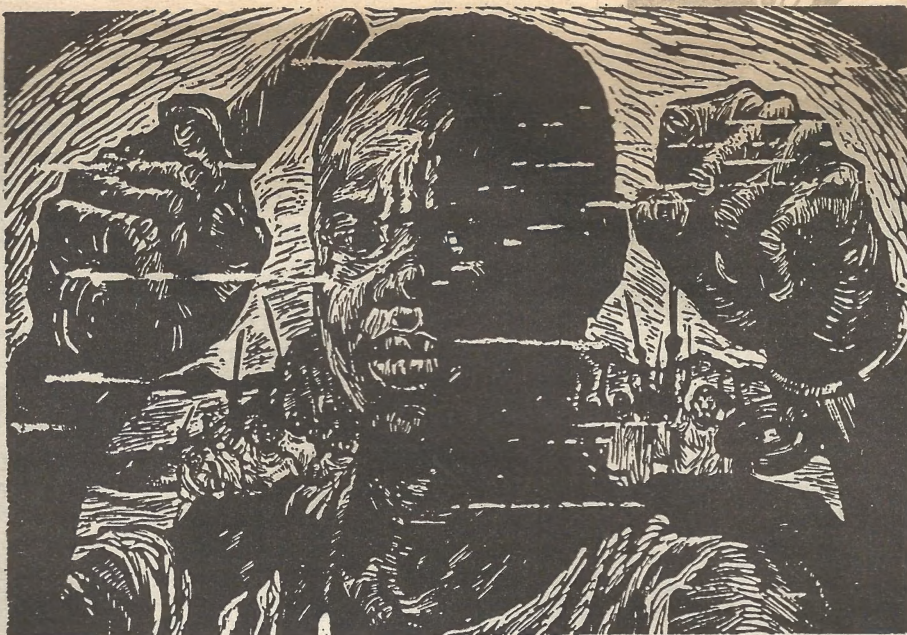
N.J. Network for Prisoner Support
c/o AFSC
972 Broad St.
Newark, NJ 07102

Greetings - It is always good to hear from a friend, comrade and activist in the struggle. I received your inquiry about the conditions here at Trenton State Prison. As I am sure that you have had some preliminary indications, the situation here is not good, and you have accurately identified the areas where the present campaign of repression is most acutely felt.

While August 10/90 represented a turning point of sorts, a basis upon which to justify extremely harsh, humiliating and inhumane measures, it should be noted that we were being treated like animals long before that date. The events leading up to August 10th were symptomatic of the bitterness that discontent breeds as well as an expression of the overwhelming frustration felt by those having to live under a tyrannical prison administration.

There are 2000 men in this institution and the degradation of each begins the moment he steps through the receiving gate. Stripped of all earthly belongings, including the clothing on his back, he is introduced into a system where individual initiative is not only discouraged, it is punished. And if he happens to be black, as 65% of the population is, he will find a world that is completely barren of any black political, social or cultural representations. Indeed, the administration of this penal facility shows an active and zealous pattern of suppressing the proliferation of black social and political thought. It is against this backdrop of deliberate racial hostility that one must view the current situation and the attempts to portray the African National Ujamma as the main culprit in prison disruption.

The African National Ujamma (ANU) was formed by prisoners seeking to fill a need within the prison environment for political diversity and the development of Afro-centric thought. Basing itself upon the principles of Ujima (collective work and responsibility) and Ujamma (cooperative economics), the ANU became a focal point in the prison community for prisoners to come together and discuss the wide range of issues affecting the black community.



Is the Black Liberation Army Still In Existence?

by Sekou Imarobge-Mussaui

In response to the “game” on New Afrikans by sadistic soldier-cops, there has been no retaliation as such to even the sides. This makes the state feel a lot more powerful, that they’re able to get away with these crimes against the people. The question on hand is: “Is the Black Liberation Army still in existence?” The purpose of this writing is that when I came into the gulag archipelago in the U.S., I was a young lumpen, until I was politically educated and recruited by vet BLA soldiers/P.O.W.s. And as a soldier, I refuse to say that the BLA has ceased to exist! The BLA was formed out of the surviving but repressed, Black Panther Party (BPP). We felt it was a stage to go

underground and operate on the defense in order to: 1) counter the repression of revolutionaries by the state; 2) to protect the people against the enemy soldiers; 3) a launch to pave the way for liberation and self-determination.

Even we, the BLA, weren’t the first urban guerrillas (clandestine group) to operate within the folds of the settler U.S. but we were the first to wage an offense/defense directly against soldiers of the state, which later made the ruling class tremble at its knees! Later on other clandestine groups like the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), the New World Liberation Front (NWLF), George Jackson Brigade (GJB), Sam Melville/Jonathan Jackson units and the United Freedom

Thus when the August 7th commemoration of Jonathan Jackson took place, followed three days later by the August 10th resistance, prison officials had already begun the search for a justification to suppress ANU. While neither of the incidents came at the behest of ANU, it has been central in the suppression campaign to attribute all incidents to ANU as part of a conspiracy to undermine the prison administration.

In so focusing attention on ANU, and wrongly so, the prison administration has diverted attention away from the real causes of the whole train of events going back to July 8/88. On that day, numerous prisoners engaged in an act of spontaneous rage; reacting to the suffocating, demeaning and restrictive regimen we are forced to abide by every day of our lives.

Instead of introducing humane reforms which are the only real solution to the present state of affairs, the prison administration has directed itself towards an iron-fisted, racist scheme to silence and repress every voice that would offer a difference of opinion. This scheme includes out-of-state transfers of prison leaders and potential leaders; dismantling the Prisoners’ Representative Committee, the only authorized representative of prison grievances; wholesale lockups of dozens of prisoners in long-term solitary confinement units; shakedowns and the withdrawal of normal prison privileges.

The average prisoner in general population spends 19 hours of each day confined to his cell; the average prisoner in solitary confinement spends 23 hours of each day confined to his cell. It does not take a bleeding heart to understand that this is no way to treat human beings. Yet this situation has endured for years, so much so that prison officials have become oblivious to the cruelty they inflict upon the men in this prison. Now we are at the stage where goon squads stand at the ready during all movements of prisoners.

Those of us in the Management Control Unit (MCU) are being subjected to even greater restrictions and callousness. Since Aug/10/90 we have been forced to wear handcuffs while being escorted by guards armed with nightsticks. This occurs every time we are required to leave the unit for any reason or when we come into contact with prison personnel within the unit. In addition, during the month of June, 1991, with no intervening incident or event, cages were constructed in the MCU. There are three separate cages, one for each of the MCU sections. Within these cages we are to partake of recreation, dining and haircuts, in small groups. Prior to the construction of the cages no restrictions were placed on the modest freedom of movement within the unit.

What we are experiencing is the steady erosion of humane considerations and the creation of a penal environment built upon malevolence and deceit. It is for this reason that we are asking all persons who are offended by the unfair and indecent treatment accorded Trenton State Prison inmates to let their voices be heard by registering their objections with the Governor of the State and the Commissioner of the Department of Corrections. The addition of your voices will aid us immensely in restoring balance and hope.

In Solidarity

Clifford “Dharuba” Roberts #54601
CN 861
Trenton, NJ 08625

This is one of several letters included in a kit prepared by sent out by Trenton prisoners to a support group in Newark in response to a series of questions about the situation in the prison. For this package of information which updates what has been happening in NJ, send at least \$3.50 to the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) address at the beginning of this letter. ∞

Front attacked the state’s institutions to try and cripple the economy. Outside the Puerto Rican groups, the BLA was the largest group in the U.S. We were autonomous and decentralized with many cells popping up and becoming active throughout the country. We have to look at our defeats from 1971-1975, with many comrades captured or killed-in-action. We must learn of the many cells that operated in the late ’70s. And we must even learn from the crushing defeat, the 1981 Brink’s case that gave the government the heart to almost totally wipe out all the clandestine movement. But that doesn’t mean we hang up the guns! The BLA has to be able to continue to exist to let the government know that we lost the battle but we haven’t lost the war! A well respected BLA POW said, “prisons are schools for revolutionaries.” It’s true. Many soldiers of the BLA were not BPP members. Many came from behind the walls. They were armed with a political consciousness to go out there with. When

continued on page 5

Corrections Commission "White Washes" Prisoner's Death

by Kenya Nkrumah

In a recent news article social worker and criminal justice advocate Joel Freedman said: "Any thorough investigation of New York prisons should also delve into why the State Commission of Correction, which was created 17 years ago to safeguard prisoners' rights, has always been so ineffective and lax in carrying out its mission." Now that the Commission of Correction has publicly released its investigation report on the death of James Charles, a Black 30-year-old former prisoner at Attica State Prison, the reason for Freedman's statement becomes quite clear.

James Charles died after an altercation with numerous guards at Attica on May 24, 1990. The beating of Charles by guards, which was witnessed by over a hundred prisoners in the recreation yard, and subsequent death led to as many as 600 prisoners staging an overnight protest in the prison yard. Angry prisoners chanting "No More Beatings, No More Murders" burned down guard shacks and broke windows during the overnight protest and demanded an independent investigation into the death of Charles.

The Commission of Correction is a prison watchdog agency. Formed some 17 years ago under former New York State Governor Hugh Carey, the Commission has legislative authority and the responsibility of assessing prisons, investigating deaths of prisoners and prison disturbances, issuing minimum prison standards and making policy recommendations to the Legislature and Department of Correctional Services (DOCS). However, the Commission has fallen far short of fulfilling this responsibility and has proven to be just another rubber stamp voice for DOCS.

In its report on Charles, the Commission termed his death a result of "severe sickle cell crisis following severe agitation and prolonged exertion in a struggle with correctional officers." Although the report notes

numerous contusions, abrasions and lacerations on the facial and head area of Charles, it states that these injuries were sustained by Charles when he fell three times and collided with a gate in the course of being escorted to the Special Housing Unit by guards.

The Commission's report conspicuously places blame for Charles' death on Richard Arquette, a prison nurse at Attica, for failing to promptly administer medical assistance to Charles when he became unresponsive. The Commission recommended that an investigation be initiated to determine the competency of Arquette as a licensed practical nurse, and that pending completion of any investigation that he be precluded from providing service to prisoners under DOCS custody. While Arquette certainly must take some blame for failing to respond to Charles' medical needs, he is clearly a "scapegoat" for the real culprits who killed Charles.

The Commission is well known for being biased in favour of DOCS officials and has a history of covering up clear cases of guard brutality that leads to a prisoner's death. What type of investigation did the Commission conduct in Charles' case? Were any of the hundred prisoners who witnessed the beat-

ing of Charles interviewed? The Commission's report on Charles is incredibly similar to its March, 1990 report on Ronald Smith. Smith, at the time a prisoner at Clinton State Prison, died following an altercation with guards at Clinton on July 20, 1989. The Commission's report called his death a result of heart failure "following an agitated physical altercation with correctional officers."

In 1983, according to a 1984 report released by Senator Franz S. Leichter (D-Manhattan) titled, "The New York State Commission of Corrections: A Study in Failure, A Proposal for Reform," the Commission "white washed" the circumstances surrounding the death of William Butch Harvey, who died after an altercation with guards at Great Meadow State Prison on April 17, 1982. The report stated that "the Commission's final report on William Harvey was a deliberate attempt to cover the fact that he was severely beaten and that such beating was related to his death." Senator Leichter accused the Commission of "gross ineptitude" and "entirely failing to perform its legislatively mandated duties," and recommended the abolition of the Commission and creation of a nine-member Correction Council. The Leichter report noted that there must be some distance between the Commission and DOCS before the Commission can function effectively and unbiasedly. Notably, as in the case

of Charles, the Commission in its report on the death of Harvey stated that Harvey sustained his injuries and was knocked unconscious when he fell to the floor after "five" escorting guards lost their grip on him.

There is clearly a need for an investigation of the Commission. When a prisoner is severely beaten by guards and subsequently dies, and the beating is witnessed by more than a hundred people, but the Commission terms the death a result of "severe sickle cell crisis" and makes no reference in its report whatsoever to prisoners' version that a beating did occur, then something is very wrong with this Commission.

As argued by Senator Leichter, there is an urgent need for an independent Commission. The present Commission should be abolished and replaced by one that has no cousin ties to DOCS. The Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus (which is doing its own investigation into the death of Charles) and other legislators should join together in urging the Senate and Assembly Committee on Codes and Corrections to set up a special committee to investigate the Commission for gross misconduct and bias in investigating the deaths of prisoners. If nothing is done to investigate and replace the present Commission, guards will continue to murder prisoners with absolute impunity! ∞

Prison Officials Use "Transfers" To Harass Political Prisoner

by Lawrence Williams

Kenya Nkrumah (Charles Montgomery) is a politically conscious prisoner who has served 17 years in New York State prisons for a crime he did not commit. Despite the fact that a lie detector test and other crucial evidence has confirmed his innocence, the state still refuses to re-open his case, partly because of his political views and prison activism.

Kenya has a reputation for challenging racism and repression in prison. He has spent practically all his time in prison organizing political organizations, cultural classes, prisoners' rights classes and educating prisoners in general about the prison system. He has written many news articles that expose the prison system as racist and oppressive. For this, prison officials have targeted Kenya for harassment and punishment. His life has been threatened by guards and he is constantly transferred from one prison to another to frustrate and discourage him from his political and anti-prison work.

In 1989 Kenya was transferred from Clinton State Prison to Auburn State Prison after being accused of encouraging prisoners to participate in a strike. The charges stemmed from his mere possession of a petition that called for an independent body to investigate the death of a prisoner at Clinton who was brutally beaten to death by several racist guards. Although the charges against Kenya were later dismissed for "lack of evidence", prison officials still retaliated by transferring him from Clinton, where he had established and was teaching a Black studies class to other prisoners.

After being at Auburn less than seven months, prison officials falsely accused him of strike organizing and transferred him to Comstock, a prison notorious for its racist policies and tolerance of guard brutality. Kenya's transfer from Auburn was actually in retaliation for an article he had written about prison labor. Prison officials would later place a copy of the article in his files where it could be read by other prison employees to negatively influence their view and opinion of Kenya.

At Comstock, Kenya chaired the African Cultural Organization (ACO), an organization he and other prisoners founded at Comstock. The organization was well organized and respected by the prison population. Several months later, following a rash of beatings by guards, Kenya and other prison-

ers were transferred from Comstock to other prisons throughout the state in retaliation for petitioning the Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus to investigate numerous incidents of beatings of prisoners by guards (see PNS Jan/Feb 1991). Since most of those transferred were executive members of the ACO, the transfers were also seen as an attack on the leadership of the ACO, which the administration at Comstock wanted to replace with prisoners who were compromising, unprincipled and easily intimidated by prison officials. Assemblyman Roger Green and other public/legislative officials protested the transfers in letters to the prison Commissioner.

Kenya was sent to Green Haven State Prison from Comstock, where he remained about six months before officials again transferred him — this time because of his work with one of the prison organizations and a newsletter he edited at the prison. Kenya is now at Elmira, another prison noted for its racism and abuse of prisoners. Elmira is located near Southport, the prison where prisoners recently rebelled over their abuse by guards and took hostages.

Prison transfers are regularly used to harass and punish prisoners for their political views and to prevent them from organizing against repression in prison. Such is clearly the reason for Kenya's repeated transfers. To focus more attention on the issue of retaliatory transfers, Prisoner Legal Services has agreed to bring a lawsuit in behalf of Kenya and other prisoners to challenge their transfer from Comstock as being in violation of their right to organize and complain about prison conditions. Anyone with information that may help the case should contact Prisoners Legal Services. Also letters protesting Kenya's treatment can be sent to the prison Commissioner and/or Governor.

James M. Bogin
Prisoners Legal Services
301 South Allen Street
Albany, NY 12208

Thomas A. Coughlin
Commissioner
Department of Corrections
State Building Campus 2
Albany, NY 12208

Mario Cuomo
Governor
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224 ∞



BLA continued from page 4

a comrade was either killed or captured, another was recruited and trained and took his or her place.

We, the BLA, are like the star fish — when an arm snaps off, another grows in its place. Today as a soldier, I see very little of that. Known and unknown (legit) BLA soldiers have to blend into the prison population because there is a lack of consciousness in many New Afrikan and Latino prisoners that is so strong that it isolates us and makes us stick out like sore thumbs. Many known POWs, especially the field marshalls play from an extremely cautious distance because the jailors know the lack of consciousness and uses it against them. The government thinks they crushed the underground and are still using witchhunt grand juries on political 'rades to beat the bushes to ferret out 'rades who are fugitives. They even jailed a former BLA soldier/POW because he refused to give up info on the whereabouts of 'rades in clandestinity.

To the readers — it hurts a lot of us to see these pigs, the SWAT teams, have open season on us (New Afrikans). Mothers, grandmothers and families, dragged out of cars, beaten by these soldiers-cops, while we just sit back and complain in silence. Armed

struggle isn't just about executing soldier-cops, representatives of the state and bank and armored car expropriations. There are levels of armed struggle. Like Jaan Lamaan stated in an interview "in order for an above ground apparatus to survive, we need an underground to protect." Both are like hand and glove. That is the law of revolution.

The incident that led to the L.A. assault on the brother would have never happened if the clandestine movement still functioned! We, the BLA, have made grave errors in the past that led to the capture and murders of many soldiers. But we should continue to exist like the Irish Republican Army (IRA), or a better example, the (West) German Red Army Fraction (RAF)!

I will close with this. Old mistakes and lessons can lead to new games. But as long as we only cry and march, this will continue to happen until the Republic of New Afrika is eliminated, along with our anti-imperialist allies. Then the state will go for the Puerto Rican Independence Movement. We must start acting against the paper tiger.

Keep the clandestine movement alive and going!

Dare to Struggle! Dare to Win!

Sekou Imarobge #81B2475
Drawer B
Stormville, NY 12582 ∞

ATTICA = RESISTANCE

America has many souls; rich and poor, black and white, inhuman and compassionate, caring and indifferent, caged and free. On September 9, 1971, the prisoners of Attica maximum security prison forced the rest of America and the world to look into the depraved soul of the United States government's iron fist of prisons—the crudest form of political and social repression—and face the racist, oppressive truth of that system. Attica is not just a point on a map or a geographical location. Nor is it just a maximum security prison in upstate New York. Attica stands for the resistance to the barbarity of the U.S. prison system; for the dignity and humanity of all prisoners; and for the never ending struggle against racism and oppression of third world people. While we organize and fight against the new supermax dungeons of today, we can take heart from Attica and use the power of Attica to bolster our efforts.

The prisoners at Attica rebelled for many reasons but it was summed up most succinctly by Attica Brother Flip: "We want to be treated as human beings. [We want what] oppressed people are advocating all over the world...We do not want to rule, we only want to live."

Conditions at Attica in 1971 were horrible. In the summer of 1971, the prison held nearly 700 more prisoners than the 1600 it had been designed for. The prison society was rife with racism. White prisoners were accorded the best jobs. 54% of the prisoners were black while 100% of the guards were white. Black magazines and books were censored or intercepted. Black Muslims were targeted and treated as subversives. The treatment of Muslims was compounded by the fact that the prison diet, which all prisoners wanted changed, was high in pork, (which they could not eat), starch and fat, containing few vegetables or fruit. The meals were budgeted at \$.63 per day per prisoner. Work was boring, nondevelopmental and paid paltry wages—monthly wages averaged \$7.50—and many prisoners had no job at all. One of the most debilitating and dehumanizing of all prison conditions was the lack of adequate medical care. The prison doctor ran the morning sick call from behind a mesh screen and examinations were rarely given. The doctor would make a diagnosis in a few seconds without physically examining the prisoner and often dismissed prisoners as malingerers or gave them a prescription for aspirin. Chronic and serious illnesses were routinely left untreated and there was little mental health care.

In response to these appalling conditions, approximately 1,200 prisoners liberated Attica on September 9, 1971, by seizing control of Times Square, the crossroads of the prison. The prisoners took 39 guards hostage, providing them with food, water, cigarettes, mattresses and blankets. A ring of Muslim prisoners encircled the hostages at all times to ensure their safety. The prisoners could not, however, protect the hostages from their murderers—the New York State Police and their fellow correctional officers. For four days after September 9, the prisoners organized themselves, elected a central committee, negotiated with prison officials, and declared their autonomy and dignity to the world, all while under the scrutiny of the media that they had invited into the prison.

On September 13, at 9:46 a.m., without any clear warning that an assault with lethal weapons was imminent, a force of 150 state troopers, prison guards and police, armed with 12 gauge shotguns, .270 caliber rifles

and .38 caliber handguns, fired for six minutes on the unarmed prisoners and hostages, seconds after a powerful and incapacitating tear gas had been released. The massacre occurred on Governor Rockefeller's approval of Correctional Commissioner Russell Oswald's recommendation, after Rockefeller refused to come to Attica in an attempt to avert the slaughter. The troopers had no evidence to believe that the prisoners had firearms. 29 prisoners and 10 hostages died as a result of the indiscriminate firing. An additional 85 prisoners and 3 hostages were injured.

One of the many ironies to emerge from Attica was that the lack of medical care available to the prisoners following the shooting mirrored the same substandard medical care available to the prisoners before the liberation. Following the shooting, prisoners were allowed to die without receiving medical treatment. Although 39 ambulances were waiting to take away the 39 hostages, seven hours passed before any prisoner was taken from the prison for medical treatment at an outside hospital. In fact, no preparations at all had been made for any outside doctors or nurses to be present; no blood, plasma or any other medical equipment was ready; the prison hospital itself was not prepared, and aside from a brief visit by the two prison doctors on the yard, a doctor from the National Guard was the only doctor in the yard that day. The most shocking revelation, however, is that the prisoners were actually attended to by two veterinarians, members of the Attica Lions Club, who had been working at a food station inside the walls, and were pressed into service by one of the two prison doctors.

Injured and uninjured prisoners alike were stripped of their clothes and possessions (including glasses, watches and false teeth), and made to run a gauntlet, naked, during which they were beaten by guards wielding clubs and other weapons. Many prisoners were also severely beaten once inside the prison.

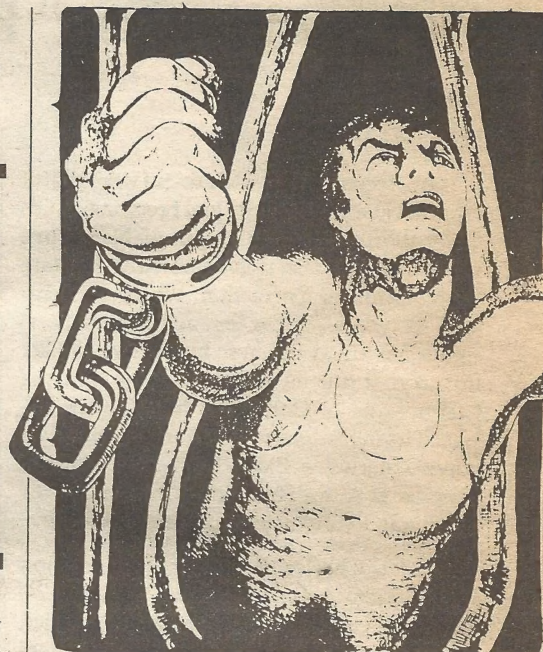
As soon as the massacre was over, the official lies began. The press was told that all the hostages had been killed by the prisoners; either by having had their throats slashed or heads hit with pipes. The press was also informed that some hostages had been castrated. The autopsy results proved otherwise, of course, but this came after the white mainstream media had splashed the

"If America has a soul, it's right here."

Attica Brother
Clarence Jones,
September 11, 1971

official lies all over the front pages of every paper in the country. In fact, not one hostage was killed by the prisoners.

But this isn't what we remember Attica for. We remember Attica because it was the single greatest act of defiance and independence by prisoners ever recorded in the U.S. As an essay published in the Black Panther newspaper noted on the first anniversary of Attica: "The prisoners' uprising at Attica was a statement of life, of human concern for survival with dignity, addressing all-too-clearly the backwardness



and armed forces of racism, exploitation and death." Notwithstanding the brutal repression present at Attica, the Attica prisoners said NO! We will not be treated as animals anymore. Attica was liberated for four and a half days. This is what we remember Attica for; this is what Attica ultimately stands for. Liberation. Power. Resistance. Above all, let us never forget, Attica equals resistance. ∞

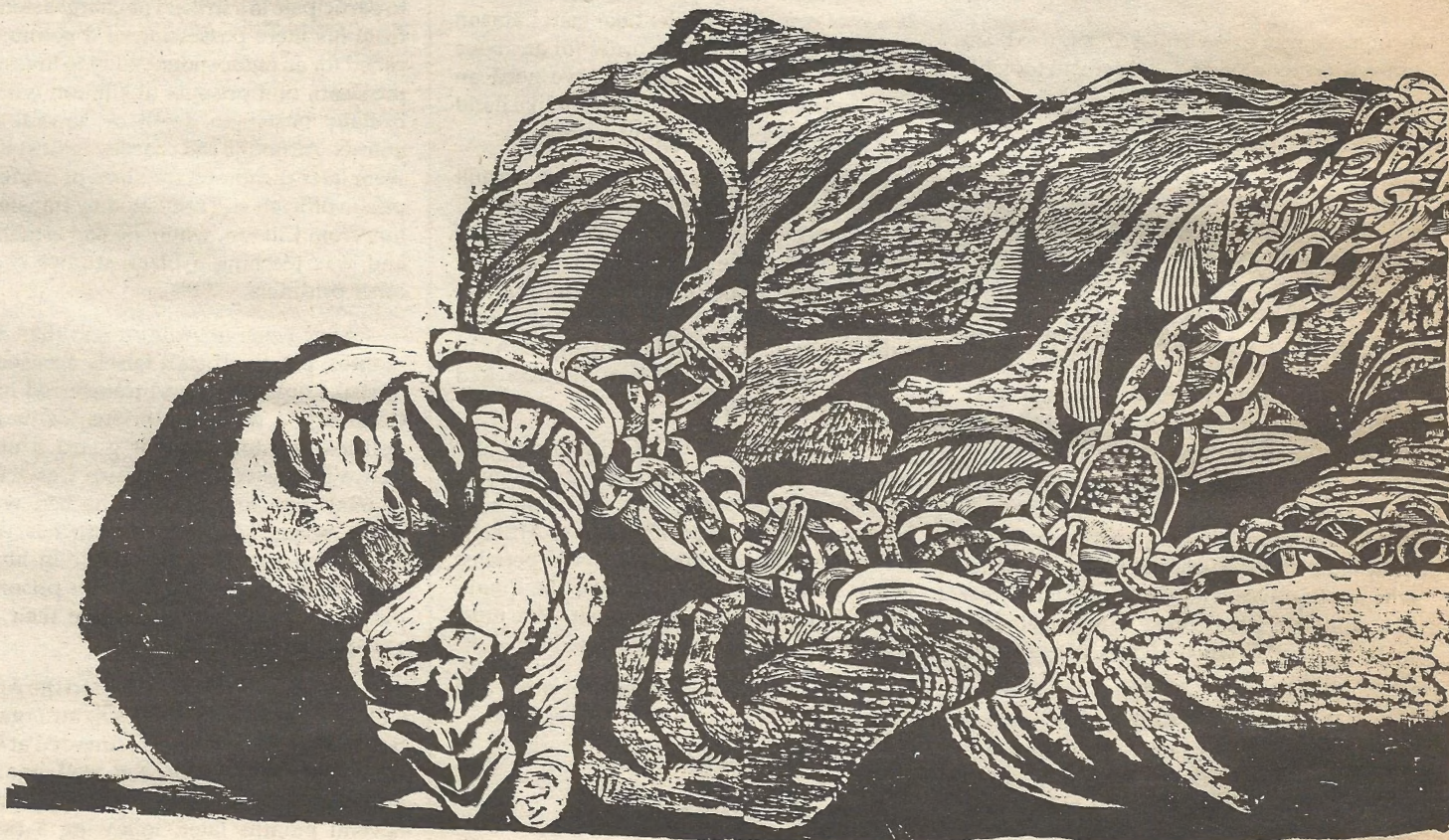
FROM ATTICA TO MARION: It's closer than you thi

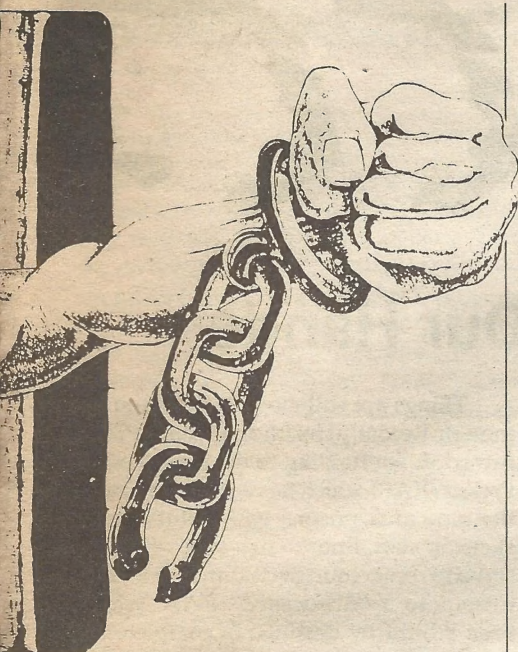
In a very real way the seeds of the relationship between Attica and Marion started 200 years ago, before either existed, with the founding of the penitentiary in the U.S. in 1790. Shortly after that first institution was opened in Philadelphia, the state of New York unveiled its first prison at Auburn, far away from New York City. Auburn would become one of the models for the development of penitentiaries in the U.S., and its decrepit building and brutal mentality would continue trudging along—always being challenged by those it was imprisoning:

Leaping ahead until 1970 we see essentially unchanged conditions at Auburn, 170 years after its opening. At this time the prisoners demanded their right to celebrate Black Solidarity Day. When the Department of "Corrections" refused this

demand, the prisoners rebelled. Once the rebellion was put down, in November of 1970, many of the leaders were transferred to Attica, a nearby prison. Just a few months later, on August 21, 1971, George Jackson was assassinated by guards in San Quentin; and prisons across the country trembled.

One of these prisons was Attica. Less than a month after the assassination of George, the prison erupted in the greatest prison rebellion in the history of the U.S. The following year, in 1972, imprisonment rates in the U.S., which had remained more-or-less constant for 50 years, started to soar. Also in 1972, a big work stoppage at the United States Penitentiary in Marion persisted. The prison officials were unable to break the strike, so instead tried to break the strikers. Over 60 leaders of the strike (including Puerto Rican National Hero





Attica = Resistance and From Attica to Marion are reprinted from *Walkin' Steel*, Vol. 1 No. 2, a publication available from:

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In Commemoration of Jonathan Jackson

by Karimu U. Diop

On August 7, 1970 a young Brother named Jonathan Jackson seized the historical spotlight when he entered a courtroom in San Rafael, California and tried to liberate three Brothers. Not only did he give the Brothers weapons, but they also took 5 hostages – one was an assistant district attorney and one was a judge. History has it that it was only a few minutes later when Jonathan died in a “hail of bullets.” Jonathan was only 17 years old on the day of his assassination, but in terms of his commitment to the cause of Black Liberation, he was more mature than most of us will ever be. We must use the term “assassination” to describe Jonathan’s death because any other term would deprive it of its political significance. Some may view this act by Jonathan to have been illegal, but we must understand that Jonathan was a Revolutionary – he didn’t recognize the legitimacy of the American judicial system because it has always been used, since the days of chattel slavery, as a tool to repress Afrikan people. We must see Jonathan in the same historical light that we see Denmark Vessey, Nat Turner or Harriet Tubman. Like Nat Turner and the others, he understood the risk and the consequences of his act, but he was guided by a much higher force – the desire to see Afrikan people free. Jonathan Jackson was a liberator!

To express our love for Jonathan and what he stood for, on August 7, 1990 about 25-30 Brothers here at Trenton state prison wore red arm bands to commemorate his death. The prison administration responded to this act of solidarity by charging those prisoners whom they were able to single out with participating in a “group demonstration.” In passing, we must understand that this term “group demonstration” is a euphemism for the word “Unity.” Any time prisoners behind these walls, who are mostly Afrikans, show any signs of Unity, it’s called a group demonstration and group demonstrations are forbidden. On this same day, approximately seven prisoners, including myself, were singled out and transferred to a lock-down unit here at Trenton called the “Vroom Readjustment Unit.” We all received 15 days in the hole and 30 days in “administrative segregation.” Between May and June, 1991, 5 of us were transferred back to Trenton state prison and placed in MCU (Management Control Units). We recognize what time it is! By placing us on these small, isolated units for indefinite amounts of time, they’re not only hoping to break us down psychologically, but they’re also hoping to stifle the proliferation of Black cultural and political awareness among Afrikan prisoners.

For the sake of clarity and historical accuracy, I must point out that when the newspapers publicized this event, they stated that we were staging a memorial to George Jackson, who died in 1965. This is incorrect! George Jackson is Jonathan’s older brother; he was assassinated, shot down, inside San Quentin prison on August 21, 1971. We feel that both George and Jonathan deserve an important spot in our history because they both were “actively” involved in our struggle for Self-Determination, and they both lost their lives in service to the people. ∞



Jonathan Jackson disarms deputy inside the Marin County Civic Center, August 8, 1970. (Photo: Jim Kean)

VOICES FROM THE INSIDE In Memory – August 21, 1971

by Larry Giddings

Sweltering heat, noxious exhaust fumes and endless taillights. Sundown in L.A. The sawed-off shotgun riding across my lap, hand on the stock, seems to make all the sounds of the city just a little sharper, the smells a little richer. Honking horns, changing gears, radio drifting in from other vehicles, drowning out our own. Cigarette smoke mixed with the growing sweat of pre-combat anxiety, as I sat in the back of the van. Just a few short minutes to go and we, my cohorts and myself, would arrive at our destination. We weren’t talking much. The radio filled the silences between last second details. The news bulletin just sort of slipped itself in-between rock & roll on the radio. The sister sitting up front turned up the volume. “*News Flash! Shootout and death at San Quentin!*”

There were no thoughts as the description, in all of its confusion, came across the speakers. Guards killed, prisoners killed, “...George Jackson dead in the prison yard...attempting to escape.” “Impossible!” said the escapee, riding in the passenger seat up front. “No way would he be trying to escape where they claim.” We were fast approaching our destination. There was no time for discussion. Preparing to go, driving and the last minute details of taking an armed action, caused us to miss the earlier news. How many prisoners died? How would this affect us in L.A.? There was no time to discuss it. The van pulled over to the curb and we piled out, taking over the store and packing weapons to haul away. Workers and customers were left safe in the back as we attempted to flee, upon the arrival of the L.A. Sheriffs and 20 other departments. Lots of shooting later, and four wounded.

Lying in a high-security hospital bed, chained to it, I realized that we weren’t going to liberate a group of prisoners as previously planned. August 21, 1971 came and went with thoughts of prisons, struggle, revolution, liberations, sweat, blood and dreams. Jonathan Jackson dies attempting to liberate

friends and soldiers of the BLA. A few weeks later, George Jackson was gunned down for speaking out and informing people of their rights as human beings, their right to live without racism and oppression of many kinds. George died, and many suffered. The FBI “COINTELPRO” program which worked so hard to destroy many nascent movements did kill George.

A decade or so later, George Jackson’s mother was awarded \$1.00 in a civil case, proving that her son was murdered and that he was not trying to escape. Angela Davis is still teaching. Geronimo Pratt (Black Panther Party) is still in prison for a “crime” he did not commit. Assata Shakur (BLA) is alive and well in Cuba. Sundiata Acoli (BLA) is in Leavenworth. Others are at Marion, and prisons all over the country. San Quentin still stands. Leonard Peltier (AIM), known to be innocent of the charges at Pine Ridge, is still in prison.

The prison system in the U.S. is now doubling in size every 5 years. The prison system is 8 times, or more, larger than it was in 1971. “COINTELPRO” still exists in many guises. Expansion of police powers is explosive. The Supreme Court and other civil bodies are as active as ever in decreasing the ability of citizens to express themselves artistically, socially, politically or otherwise.

Twenty years have passed. Every August 21, I think of that August 21, in 1971. I relive that long ride through the streets of L.A., the news report, the guns and bullets and the thoughts of why I was not there. The death of George Jackson was not just linked to L.A. George’s death has linked many people for decades. That long ride caused me to spend years in prison and learn more about George, from those who knew him. It has been twenty years. In that time, I have come to know that there are many George Jacksons. They still live in prison cells and they still struggle. August 21 is a good day to remember them and know it is only our vigilance that keeps them alive. ∞

Linking Anti-Racist and Lesbian/Gay Struggles

Excerpt from June 1991 interview with Laura Whitehorn for Queeradio on CKLN, a Toronto progressive radio station. Laura is a member of the Resistance Conspiracy Six. Thanks to Rick Lines for transcribing the interview.

We were convicted of conspiracy to resist u.s. government war crimes. They didn't call them war crimes but we know what they are. Given everything that's gone on over the past few months I think it just shows that our resistance was justified and was righteous and that all of those who have been trying to resist the ongoing war crimes of the u.s. government have been doing the right thing.

The support that people have given for political prisoners, the agitation to show that there are political prisoners, and people trying to give us a voice outside as you are on this show, all of that has a direct impact on people's legal cases and situations. Sometimes I'm sure it feels that people are trying to raise awareness in some kind of vague way, but I really want people to understand that it has a direct impact on our conditions and our ability to continue to resist, and to win our freedom.

I think that my being an out lesbian, and Linda Evans also, during the [RC6] case, has helped us build support for political prisoners and for our case because we got such an outpouring of support from our lesbian and gay sisters and brothers, and I think in particular because the lesbian and gay movement is fighting on the issue of AIDS, for people's lives and against the government neglect and attacks, and against homophobia. It's created a situation where people are very militant out there.

On the other hand, being a lesbian in the hands of the federal government is the pits. They don't even have to say anything because the homophobia is so ingrained in every aspect of life for women in the federal prison system. It's all pervasive. It's everything from the emphasis on make-up and femininity to the kind of anti-gay religious programs that are brought into the prisons. There's a rise in the fundamentalist right in every religion, I think, in the world. And so much of it is in a women's prison since they know that a lot of women who are locked up for years turn to other women for love and support and for the little bit of sexuality you can still maintain in prison, and so they have a whole program to try and prevent that. People find religion for good and bad reasons, I guess. They are searching for something because they're kind of freaked out. They're separated from their families, they're scared, they're facing a lot of time in prison, so the anti-gay message becomes a very big threat. Like, if you sleep with a woman your judge is going to give you a bigger sentence because you're going to be doing "bad". I don't know if my being out has helped other lesbians to come out, but people are encouraged to talk about it in a more positive way than just to act out some of the butch/femme kind of things that are the more dominant way of being gay in prison, at least in my experience; there were more options, more ways to be a lesbian on the street. I think

the main thing that's helped people is the gay literature that I get, things like *Gay Community News* and all kinds of newspapers and pamphlets. People love them. It's some of the most popular literature I get.

When I was active more in the public movements, before I went underground, there was a tremendous separation between the gay and lesbian movement and the anti-imperialist movement, except for those who were anti-imperialist dykes and gay men. I don't remember there being that many of us. I think that the fact that the government has become more upfrontly oppressive in general, and also against gay people, has made a difference—as far as I can tell from things I've read there's more unity now.

If white people, specifically oppressed white people who are not really benefitting all that much from the dominant society, although as white people I think we still do benefit from it a lot, if we don't ally with oppressed peoples then I think that we're making a very big mistake. The issue of self-determination for oppressed nations, while it's not exactly the same as the issue of our right to determine our own sexuality, I think that at base those are the same issues. If this society respected women, if it respected gay people, if it respected Third World people, then we would have a different society and that's what we're struggling for.

I also think that over the years there have been divisions created—they're not just created, they exist and the government exacerbates them. We should be able to learn from the years and years that the Black movement has struggled, and the Puerto Rican movement and the Native American movement have struggled to explain COINTELPRO and to explain how the empire divides people.

I guess people up there have been doing solidarity work with the Native struggles. Sitting in DC jail reading about that, it seemed so clear that what was being taken on in those struggles was the essence of the Empire. Taking the land, taking the resources, and taking the right of self-determination for Native people. In the 1970s I did a lot of work in support of the Republic of New Afrika and the struggle to free the land of the Black Nation. I would come up against it time and time again when these white leftists would say "No, it's not a struggle for land. It's an economic struggle." But what is land? Is it outside of the economy? Is it outside of the whole structure of nationhood? I could never understand how the issue of land could be separated from other issues of justice and freedom.

I think the fight against racism, as far as I can tell, is at least being recognized as important to engage in among white lesbians and gay men. From what I can see the conditions of life for Third World peoples in the united states are just becoming worse and worse, as up front as when the klan was doing it in the '50s. Yet I don't really see out there a movement yet that is confronting that head on and making it its priority. We all have a real tendency to understand our own oppression and the ways that we're messed over, and have a little bit of trouble understanding how other people are. But there's absolutely no freedom for one segment of the society if there isn't freedom for everybody. That's a really basic truth for me and it's what I would like to continue devoting my life to fighting for. That's what's going to bring me liberation as a lesbian, too. I think that lesbians and gays in Third World communities often meet with different forms, same source but different forms, of homophobia. In some cases there hasn't been as much of a tradition of a gay and lesbian movement and so that power is lacking and when you don't have that power behind you it's a lot harder to be out and it's a lot harder to fight for your own freedom. ∞

Laura Whitehorn #22432-037
3301 Leestown Rd., Bluegrass Unit
Lexington, KY 40511



AIDS Issue Is In Our Hands

Since increasing efforts to understand the HIV/AIDS crisis and learning of its magnitude within prisons, I realized just what sort of issue is in our hands. Yes, our hands, because only with prisoners and their supporters taking the initiative will we ever arrest a growing epidemic. It is as though the ruling class have washed their hands but they have yet to be aware that it is the sort of dirt that just does not come off. HIV/AIDS is simply not going away and it certainly will not remain contained within prison walls.

Reflecting on the Tories' (Conservative Party) negligence has led to a very real fear that the government is making a grave mistake ignoring a grave malaise. Prisoners are not being adequately educated on the facts, there are no proper preventative measures and the treatment of prisoners with HIV/AIDS (PWA's) is nothing less than terrible. Furthermore, everyone seems to ignore the fact that most prisoners are eventually getting out to the community. And they will be practising unsafe sex and shooting up just as they did in prison.

Analysis of literature from international to local groups over the past year or so shows the increasing concern among support and advocacy groups who are seeking prison policy reform to accommodate the crisis. Community medical and social groups are endorsing the call for attention as well. Furthermore, prisoners who in the past have been deterred from speaking up are coming forward. The support, solidarity, caring and love have all been great. Nonetheless, we need more and everyone owes it to their children, neighbours and themselves to see that something effective is done in very short order.

While asking that the solicitor general's office call for a public inquiry, Health and Welfare Canada must fund the local groups who are addressing the prison situation. Prison communities have been doing their best with education on both sides of the walls. There has been ongoing support counselling from volunteer care-givers. And peer groups within the prisons have done everything possible despite the hassles and general disinterest of prison officials, administration and justice departments.

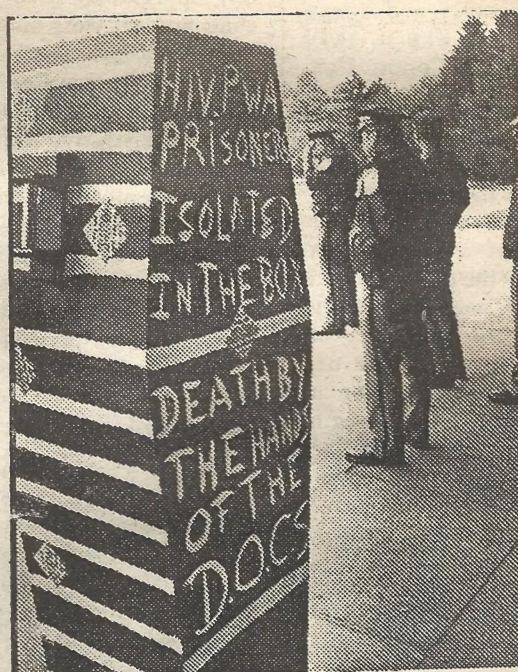
Things are still moving much too slow, though. Recently Health and Welfare Canada turned down funding to the Kingston AIDS Project (KAP) which has been barely serving the nine area prisons with volunteers and skeleton staff. Prior to this upset a judge reserved a recent court decision to allow Habeas Corpus to a "dissociated" PWA, who has been arbitrarily detained in complete isolation. Since the judge said he would decide "at the end of the summer," medical treatment and the general attention that he was getting petered out to the same abuse he went through the first four months of his isolation. Moreover, prison staff continue to hinder the efficacy of community groups who are trying to educate volunteers to lead peer groups. Just when some things seem to be moving in the right direction and we are able to take a breath in the struggle, we see how we need much more pressure from direct action.

On the other hand, we must make mention and praise the efforts of Gay Bell, a Toronto prisoners' rights activist who produced and hosted a radio program aired on Prisoners' Justice Day (PJD) that commemorated those who have died unnatural deaths in prison and focused on the AIDS issue. ACTUP: Montreal sponsored the pre-taped program that was aired August 10th on various Canadian university radio stations. Over the past year, ACTUP has been educating and helping Quebec prisoners through education and counselling. Then there is KAP organizing peer groups in "Alcatraz North", Millhaven, and providing ongoing counselling for PWA's. The devotion and energy of all these people involved is certainly an inspiration for us all and deserves credit. It is what will help

us find the energy to maintain the struggle. We have to applaud everyone, families of prisoners, the socially conscious, the volunteers. Even more so, we owe it to the PWA's who have given us enough trust so those who do can keep on caring.

Always arming the spirit,

Zoltan Lugosi
#506985A
Box 22
Kingston, Ont.



AIDS and Prison Radio Series

Radio shows dealing with prisoners and AIDS, compiled by Gay Bell of the Support Network for Prisoners with HIV/AIDS, are now available on tape.

The three-part series is comprised of 25-30 minute sections, each of which includes musical, poetic and dramatized expression as well as documentary-style reporting on AIDS in Canadian prisons. Prisoners and outside activists articulate demands and address issues of racism, sexism, sexuality in prison and prospects for prisoners living with AIDS when they are released.

Contact Support Network for Prisoners with HIV/AIDS, Box 87, 689 Queen St. W., Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6J 1E6. The cost for the set is \$6.00 CDN.



The Root Of All Evil?

by Bill Dunne

In the last issue of *PNS* (#31, Jul./Aug. 91), an article contributed by Steve Whitman entitled, "The Crime of Black Imprisonment" appeared. Steve skillfully applied his expertise to crunching through the statistical complexities of imprisonment to reveal a much clearer and more comprehensible picture of this atrocity committed by the apparatus of repression. He also used the words of the penal system's own theorists and operators to demonstrate that the U.S. gulag archipelago is an aggravated atrocity because it doesn't wreak its damage by accident and doesn't do what is claimed for it. However, Steve's analysis of the circumstances he describes so well is lacking.

Imprisonment in the U.S. is not only an institution for black people as Steve asserts, nor is it only black imprisonment in the U.S. that is a crime. There is no doubt that black people are incarcerated in gross disproportion to their representation in the society and that black prisoners do more time on average than do white prisoners. That doesn't alter the fact that more than half of prisoners are white or define themselves in other racial groups. Even if the more rapid acceleration in black imprisonment were to reduce that proportion to a third or a quarter, ignoring such a large minority would be a damaging distortion. Further, the subjection of black people to disproportionate imprisonment by the ruling class does not make imprisonment of the others less onerous or imply that they are somehow complicit in creating the inequality. Steve mentions that the incarceration rate for white people is more than twice the Western European rate. This indicates that its being lower than that for blacks is not a benefit and that similar factors drive both black and white imprisonment.

Steve asks what the purpose of the U.S. prison system is and correctly concludes that it is some form of control and counterinsurgency mechanism. He errs, however, when he concludes that it is only such for people of colour. In actuality, it is a weapon against rebellion by the proletarian population gen-

erally, 80% of which is white. The U.S. ruling class is interested in power and power is predicated on economics. It could much more cheaply buy off whatever parts of a 12% or even as 20% minority it hasn't already than it could control it by force, much as it has bought off large swaths of the majority since World War II. Steve points out that a Harvard education is cheaper per year than prison. It cannot buy off 60-80% of the population whose fortunes will be declining in the face of a changing world situation in which capital is increasingly internationalized and the U.S. state no longer dictates international terms of trade. The pie is getting smaller and the ruling class wants to maintain and even increase its cut. Others thus have to lose, and people will rebel against losing what they have and should have. For that, the ruling class needs the stick.

The stick is the swollen apparatus of repression and a greatly expanded prison system in particular. People of colour and black people in particular are disproportionately among the most socially, economically and politically disenfranchised segment of the population and thus have the greatest reason to rebel and become a threat to the ruling class. Thus the ruling class steps hardest on them. This is clear from the Black Panther Party experience Steve uses to support his contentions. Steve fails to mention, though, that other things were happening at the time of the Black Panther Party suppression in the late '60s and early '70s that made such a militantly radical formation especially threatening to the ruling class. The Black Panther Party was not merely some minority rights struggle, but was a precursor and example and at the leading edge of the struggle for the most equitable social reality for all people in a time of great social ferment. But while neutralizing the leaderships of particular organizations the ruling class finds threatening is a primary goal of prisons, it doesn't nearly explain more than doubling the country's prison populations in the last decade. The necessity to control an entire class does.

Confronted with increasing capitalist competition and the prospect that it will only

get worse, the U.S. faction of the ruling class must reduce its costs. This means it will no longer be able to buy social peace with relatively high living standards and the appearances of an egalitarian society as it has been. It will be forced to more ruthlessly exploit its working and proletarian populations and oppress them both in the process and when they inevitably resist. But that will not be enough if it is apparent to the people — who, after all, produce the real wealth and have the strength of numbers — that the ruling class is the real villain. Hence, the ruling class sows racial, gender, sexual orientation and whatever other sort of division and conflict it can among the constituent parts of that much larger class that shares exploitation and oppression.

Evidence suggests that racism will be a major tactic in a strategy that is not limited to divide and rule. Black people are the only minority sufficiently numerous to be used credibly as a scapegoat. By its massive imprisonment of black people (among other ways), the ruling class is trying to criminalize an easily identifiable segment of society and paint it as responsible for societal ills. The public is fed images of stereotyped welfare mothers and crack babies and drug dealers and dope fiends and gangsters as black when far more whites are on welfare, the number of hispanic children who are poor is increasing fastest, and illegal drug abuse is about proportional among the races. Use of scapegoat populations is nothing new in politics.

In the current context, such scapegoating goes beyond sowing division: It allows the obscene and rapid expansion of the gulag archipelago that will be necessary to accommodate legions of people to whom increasing impoverishment will extend rebellion and resistance. It allows the construction of a more draconian apparatus of repression in which the police brutality and harsh prison conditions necessary as tools of control will be accepted. It allows the withdrawal of expensive and time consuming civil rights that impede the apparatus of repression by giving common people power. It is easier to accomplish these things using poor black people because they are predominantly removed, isolated, segregated from the 80% majority the ruling class really needs to keep tricked, and are thus more easily made to appear villainous and threatening.

Steve notes that the rate of white incarceration is over twice that of other western industrialized countries whose ruling class elements are not as pressed by the current crises of capitalism. This is further evidence that it is class control rather than solely racist oppression that is responsible for both the magnitude and racial disproportion of the current U.S. use of imprisonment. So are facts like the divergence between ruling class rhetoric and practice and what would be expected by straight-up racists. And where is the incentive for racial genocide? If successful, the ruling class loses a scapegoat for its policies, the benefits of division, an excuse for repression and the profits from exploiting a large portion of the workforce.

Steve asserts that because he believes black people constitute an oppressed nation, he treats the word "black" as a proper adjective in common adjective contexts and thus capitalizes it. He does not treat "white" used in the same contexts the same. This is another error in analysis. If he sees black people as a separate nation only because of their racial oppression, then the necessarily different race doing the oppressing also must constitute a nation, which Steve would presumably label the oppressor nation. For Steve, that nation is defined as and by being "white" as he mentions "other national groupings" without describing them as oppressive for "other people of colour", the designation "people of colour" being generally understood to exclude only white. According to Steve's logic, white used in the same common adjective contexts in which he capitalizes black would then also have to be capitalized. However, neither is grammatically correct, race alone being an insufficient criterion for nationality. If there were a New Afrika, a citizen thereof would be a New African and his or her race could be correctly described as black or white, uncapitalized.

It is important to act on the basis of how things are rather than how we'd like them to be or how they'd have to be to justify our theories. Merely eliminating racial disparities in imprisonment in the U.S. by whatever means will not fix imprisonment or adequately address its use as an instrument of class control. White supremacy and its racist results are not the root of all evil; they are symptoms of class domination, which is. If symptoms are treated as the whole of the disease, cure is unlikely. ∞

Political Prisoners: Segregation or Integration?

by Paul Wright

I was recently informed that in Israeli prisons one of the major questions confronting (Jewish-Ed.) political prisoners is that of being forcibly integrated with social prisoners. (Social prisoners are those being held captive for common or "social" crimes, i.e. non-political, but recognizing that to an extent all "crime" in a capitalist society is political.) This policy of forced integration is also carried out in England against Irish Republican prisoners, as well as in other countries. It was in opposition to integration that Bobby Sands and nine other volunteers died on hunger strike in the early 1980's.

What is it about integration that drives some political prisoners (PPs) to give their lives struggling against it? The state seeks to place PPs in prison populations with social prisoners in an effort to remove any legitimacy from the PPs' outside movements, and to brand the PP as a common criminal.

Many countries, such as the United States, deny that they even have PPs. This is partially accomplished by not segregating prisoners into political or non-political sections of prisons. Generally it is for this reason that the government will seek to have the forced integration of political and social prisoners. It is to avoid this stigma, to an extent a propaganda defeat, that political prisoners have resisted integration.

I believe that the policy of resisting integration with social prisoners by PPs is incor-

rect. On the streets we, as militants and revolutionaries, would not seek to isolate ourselves and cut ourselves off from daily contact with the masses. Yet this is exactly what PPs now seek to do. While there may be a concern among PPs to avoid the apparent stigma of being "criminalized" if placed with social prisoners, this should not be our main concern.

If the PPs believe that as revolutionaries their goal is to bring about a radical transformation of society, this isn't going to be done by segregating and isolating themselves from potential recruits. Let the state do that, we shouldn't do their work for them! Generally, the people we find in prison in the capitalist countries are from the weakest, poorest, most exploited sectors of society. Here in the U.S. that means largely black and Hispanic youth. In Europe it means immigrants and the working class. We find few, if any, rich white men in prison, and virtually none serving lengthy prison terms.

Each of the prisoners around us is a potential revolutionary. In prison, the facade of bourgeois democracy is non-existent. No prisoner believes in the "rule of law", simply because in prison it is the rule of brute force by the state. What has to be done is that prisoners who are not politically conscious need to be guided and shown why things are the way they are.

Here in the U.S., quite a few revolutionaries were first politicized in prison. Many later went out to form units of the armed

struggle in the 1970's, i.e. the Black Liberation Army, George Jackson Brigade, United Freedom Front, etc. The revolutionary commitment made by former social prisoners is not to be slighted.

Prison affords an opportunity for introspection and study that is often denied by the daily grind of actually carrying out a revolution in the streets. An Irish POW with whom I correspond, in defending the segregation of PPs from social prisoners, says a major goal of his organization (the INLA) is to give its own cadre political education and training when they come to prison: because of the clandestine nature of their struggle on the street, it is difficult if not impossible to do so outside. But the organization is barely able to meet that obligation without trying to politicize social prisoners as well.

Where PPs are housed with social prisoners, there is usually an opportunity for discussion and study groups. Often there will be social prisoners interested in learning more about Marxism or revolutionary theory. This should be encouraged and developed, not shunned and fled from.

For any revolutionary movement to succeed, it must be able to replace its cadre faster than they are killed or captured in the struggle. All revolutionaries must realize that prison is just another front on which we wage our struggle. Ours is essentially a political struggle for people's hearts and minds, without which we will never win.

By not seeking to politicize the social prisoners, we abandon the prison battleground to the state and to reactionary ideologies. Several racist neo-Nazi groups have made concerted efforts to recruit in prisons across the U.S. We

cannot allow them to win by default. The struggle against racism, sexism and homophobia is just as intense, if not more so, in prison than it is on the street. The confrontation with the state is also as intense in prison. Oppressors should have no peace, anywhere.

I have heard PPs comment, "We're too weak to do this or that." Yes, they are weak if they count only other PPs. If they make an effort to mobilize and include the social prisoners, this changes. It's one thing for a prison administration to face 30 PPs in a prison; it's quite another to have to deal with all 500 prisoners, social and political, on common demands like food quality, visiting, etc. This won't happen as long as PPs seek to hide from the reality embodied in the social prisoners.

In the U.S., one means of oppression the state likes to use is cross-country transfers. My view is that, while not desirable, this policy means the revolutionary ember is being scattered to places it might not otherwise go. I suspect that a hidden problem among those PPs who oppose integration with social prisoners is a lingering class elitism. They do not want to actually mingle with "the masses", or perhaps fear them. If so, this must be vigorously struggled against.

Ho Chi Minh said, "When the prison doors are opened, the real dragons will fly out." Well, he didn't mean the dragons that hide among themselves. Each revolutionary who goes into prison should bring out 10 more with him/her. ∞

Originally published as a Letter to Challenge, an Israeli political magazine.

Paul is a co-editor of *Prisoners' Legal News*. Write to: Paul Wright #930783, POB 5000 (HC-63), Clallam Bay, WA 98326-9775.

The Marionette

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Means of Destruction

In the recent past, U.S. politicians made a big deal of excoriating the Soviets for allegedly using forced convict labor on military projects. At this very moment, they are continuing to rail against the importation of prisoner-made products from China and have even made it illegal. Yet in their infinite hypocrisy, they say not a word about the coerced extraction of labor from prisoners in many parts of the U.S. USP Marion, over which the national politicians whose mouths most loudly condemn forced prison labor have influence, provides a good illustration of this neo-slavery, its ramifications, and the hypocrisy that allows it to thrive.

Prisoners at Marion are required to work for UNICOR, the industrial corporation formed to exploit the labor of federal prisoners, in order to obtain an eventual transfer to a more open prison. The administration claims that this is not forced labor because the prisoners may "choose" to be permanently locked down instead. In all other federal prisons having UNICOR, such labor is voluntary, with prisoners permitted to obtain other jobs or to go to academic or vocational classes. In addition to being forced, the work required of prisoners in Marion UNICOR is all on military contracts rather than constructive projects with real and rewarding benefits.

Workers in the Marion factory, where a variety of specialized cables are fabricated, are subject to extremes of all the forms of material exploitation that plague many workers on the streets. Pay is abysmal and benefits non-existent. Because labor is forced, prison medical cops are even more blatant in their attitude that most prisoner complaints are malingering. Working conditions are mentally and physi-

cally threatening. Hazardous materials are much used, sometimes by people who can't read the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), and are not handled in accordance with the manufacturers' warnings, suggestions and regulations. No passive monitors for contamination are used despite their availability. Appropriate lighting and ventilation devices are deemed "too expensive". The facility is crowded. Noise is sometimes stressfully excessive. Boring, repetitive tasks are the norm and no saleable skills are imparted. Prisoners are sweated to increase their production and may be punished for failure to meet demanded (and sometimes unspecified) quotas.

Prisoners may also be punished for transgressing any of myriad, incomprehensible, less than petty, unevenly enforced rules that have nothing to do with work performances and may be made up on the spot. Punishment may be inflicted without due process as in charge and hearing and may signal official displeasure with "legal" activities like complaining about conditions. Prisoners have been punished for such horrible crimes as farting or having an unbuttoned shirt where that is forbidden.

All of these "traditional" labor abuses integrate well into dungeon Marion's mission as a laboratory for experiments in social manipulation and control. Transfer out of Marion



especially with the prospect of the deeper dungeon being built at Florence, CO, on the horizon is a fat enough carrot that people will endure a lot of stick for a chance at it. As in the rest of Marion, the primary vector of official attack is now psychological, backed by the imminent threat of official violence. In the pretransfer/UNICOR program, a feeling of something to lose is added, the impression having been created that some decision has been made that will allow passage to one lucky enough to successfully navigate the uncharted rocks and reefs hostile bureaucracy has put in the pre-transfer path. The loss may be of years.

Prisoners, like other people, need work (whatever it may be called and however it may be structured) through which to feel some control over their existence, some sense of self-worth and some consciousness of competence through which to contribute to and connect with a community. At Marion, prisoners' most basic needs (food, clothing, shelter) are mostly met, even if it is in a manner that frequently imposes new stressors. The factory work, however, is not intended to and doesn't open the door to satisfying higher human needs through creative, constructive activity; on the contrary, personal security is diminished in USP Marion UNICOR. No one knows what to expect from officialdom. Everyone realizes he is under constant surveillance. There are many more risks of knowingly or unknowingly incurring the costly wrath of petty tyrants. The swine themselves may be unpre-

dictably reacting to their own psycho-instability, engendered by being little piglets in a big prisonocracy as well as part of the Marion experiment.

People want to reap the satisfaction of working and working well but are inhibited by the knowledge that the work is for the enemy, is coerced and is dead end. Moreover, the myriad asinine regulations that may result in interruption or even termination of even the best work demonstrate that participation is more a statement of submission than valuable and validating labor. People are concerned about their health as a result of knowing about the toxic materials used in production and seeing the marked increase in minor, related maladies among workers that may only be symptoms of worse. Prisoners are well aware of the administrators' willingness to expose them to environmental hazards. The penny-pinching unwillingness to buy equipment that would make the work safer and easier reinforces perceptions of its worthlessness.

Nevertheless, the impetus to do well something one has made the decision to do is a tough one to resist. People need to feel competent, even if satisfying that need, while being exploited and oppressed raises a stressful contradiction. Resisting it raises the fear that it will be noticed and considered resistance to authority, refusal to "program" and a failure to conform. The fear tarnishes self-image with doubt and feelings of weakness and capitulation in the face of pressure, analytic conclusions about the propriety of participation in pursuit of superordinate goals notwithstanding. Resistance also breeds paranoia. Both failing to resist and results of resisting can make it harder to relate to the other victims of this work manipulation, further isolating prisoners despite the congregate character of the "program".

Complaining about conditions has been futile and is dangerous. It is apparent from who gets kicked out of the "program" and returned to lockdown that it is not always the trivial violations of rules frequently cited as an excuse that are the reason. Also, the swine know that prisoners are generally in the "program" for less than a year before being transferred or locked down and can slow-play complaints until they are moot. Although administrators have nothing to worry about from the local court, it is unlikely that Marion UNICOR abuses will even get to court, given the court's unique pre-administration rule that Marion prisoners cannot be transferred with a case pending. So with prisoners for the most part keeping their heads down and the swine with plenty of obstacles and sticks the situation is unlikely to change soon. ☞

Institutionalizing Ignorance

The construction of a new, larger and likely more oppressive federal lockdown dungeon at Florence, CO, seems to have had a laxative effect on the bureaucratic constipation that has so long kept USP Marion in hard and motionless lockdown, at least in minor respects. The population is at its lowest since the lockdown started, and a few of the people who expected long or permanent lockdown are being permitted to transfer. Tier recreation in the three main lockdown blocks has been extended by 15 minutes a day and the most petty harassments have diminished. The perestroika has not, however, extended to the major.

The seeming improvement in administrative attitude made some prisoners think that there might even be a remote possibility of including constructive pursuits such as participatory education, TV leaving much to be desired in that regard. In Feb/91, a request to the "education" department for discussion of that possibility went unanswered. Discussions with various officials survived the laugh test and Associate Warden for Programs, M. Collins, suggested submitting a proposal on the subject.

On 15/Apr/91, a proposal to expand Marion education was submitted. It suggested as a starting point a program based on the correspondence courses currently made available one at a time. The idea was, essentially, to offer the first two semesters of college work to prisoners in the pre-transfer unit, who would participate in lieu of working in the prison factory. The proposal recommendations were relatively inexpensive, included a great deal of flexibility and provided real and substantial benefits not only to prisoners but to the swine as well. They were also readily adaptable to adult education and high school equivalency classes, which are currently totally unavailable to pre-transfer prisoners (unlike all other federal prisoners), in which the college program students could even give personal and video instruction. Nothing but an opening of doors would have been required to allow participation by other prisoners as such a program was expanded.

From time to time thereafter, Collins and other officials were asked about the proposal, inquiries that elicited responses ranging from indifferent to irritated declarations that it was being considered. After four months, Collins finally got around to reacting: Denied. Not

getting laughed off is not the same as getting smiled on! Small consolation came from the educational content of the denial itself. It illustrated the need for someone around here to get some education and that staff, right up to its exalted echelons is threatened by prisoners obtaining any more education than they can on their own.

The denial, an official U.S. Government Memorandum, was 138 words in three paragraphs, the last of which wasn't even two whole lines. It was prepared by Education Supervisor Williams, "Education Staff", and Collins, in whose domain education falls. Their "finding revealed" not only the excuse that Marion education allegedly meets policy requirements, but also a multitude of grammatical errors scattered across all three paragraphs. These included erroneous choice of case for proper and common nouns and adjectives, improper use of the passive, a syntax stumble, number disagreement between noun and pronoun and punctuation failures.

Other suggestions/requests for additional education have also been made, to no avail. Monitoring courses "education staff" wouldn't even have to teach would be just too much when there are basketballs that need air or bingo to run. This refusal to consider improving access to education at Marion does not bode well for the opportunities that will be afforded at Florence. Innovative programs could be tested at Marion, which the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) could then get away with

losing in the transfer to Florence without taking a lot of heat if it didn't like them. The BOP's failure to do so indicates that it doesn't intend to have any more education at Florence than it already does at Marion, if that much. This comports with the apparently prevailing attitude among the wasters of the prisonocracy that educational opportunities are a luxury amounting to coddling of prisoners and/or reward for criminal behavior. They have long known that ignorant people are much easier to manipulate and control. ☞

Marionette Editor: Bill Dunne,
#10916-086, POB 1000 Marion, IL
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out and make some of your own.*

Shooting Back

by Bill Dunne

PNS #31 (Jul/Aug 91) carried a "Letter Michael Stotts Responds to Criticisms." This letter was precipitated by an article entitled "Michael Stotts, Uncovered?" by Larry Giddings in PNS #30 (May/Jun/91).

What immediately struck me about this letter/response was that it first attempted to assassinate the character and credibility of Larry Giddings rather than the criticisms. The attack begins with the irrelevancy that Stotts does not know Giddings with its inane implication that Giddings thus could not know bad things about Stotts. Following closely is an effort to undermine Giddings' credibility by casting doubt on whether he was really a prisoner for the nearly 20 years he cites as experience that helped him reach his conclusions about Stotts.

I have known Larry Giddings for the last 18 years, did many of those years in the same prisons with him, and know for a fact that he did two years under severe lockdown before I met him. We were banished into internal exile in the federal prison system in 1982 when our and some comrades' activism in Washington State Penitentiary at Walla Walla became sufficiently displeasing to the state's prison authorities. Giddings hasn't directly seen the outside of USP Leavenworth since being deposited there after seeing the country on the agency of repression plan on that trip. Giddings' practice in all that time has been exemplary and has never raised any question of principle, unlike Stotts'.

Stotts claims 21 years "in the system" and suggests that his failure to have met Giddings among more than three quarters of a million prisoners in a far flung gulag of myriad islands signifies something more sinister. He brands Giddings a liar on the basis of alleged non-arrival of letters with which Giddings tried to establish contact with Stotts via PANAL, an organization with which Stotts is affiliated. After all Stotts' time "in the system", he should be well aware that letters sent by prisoners are not always sent by swine. And he does claim that at least one incompetent person who did not take care of biz has worked for PANAL. Stotts further asserts that letters whose style "we" (presumably he and PANAL) don't like go in the garbage. Does he remember every such letter? They must not have liked the style of the ones I sent either. Or maybe he/they didn't get them and I am therefore a liar, too, all of the above notwithstanding.

Stotts presses his attack on Giddings by convicting him of hysterical conspiracy theories, pompous ranting, rhetorical dicta, inconsistency, undocumented "bad-jacketing", and having no point, none of which is visible in Giddings' article. Such things are readily apparent in Stott's reaction, however. He decries conspiracies, yet ascribes the diverse criticisms of him to the conspiracies of drug traffickers, liars and cranks. He rails against people wanting answers to concerns he describes as bullshit yet carries those concerns to the contrary. He makes macho declarations as if rhetorical willingness to engage in trial by combat demonstrates his rectitude. He writes that no one in prison is worthy of trust and then professes to be a champion of prisoners. And he slings a lot of unsupported accusations for one so vehemently denigrating critical statements made on evidence and even paperwork. In short, Stotts' tirade is

more vitriolic reaction than the requisite reasoned and principled response.

Stotts' reaction to criticism of trying to shoot the messenger(s) raises other questions than those that form the basis of Giddings' article. So does his insistence that he owes no explanations of the appearances of impropriety. About those appearances: I, too, heard about Stotts being confronted in El Reno prison by a prisoner claiming to have been victimized by Stotts' snitching. The prisoner recounting this incident told it essentially as Giddings wrote it, has never misled me and had no reason to "bad jacket" Stotts. The issue then comes down to witnesses vs. Stotts. Should we be influenced by Stotts' other practice (the foregoing, for example) in reaching our verdict on their veracity? Clearly, for what else do we have to determine the advisability of interaction with this person?

I did not see Stotts' alleged threat to sue *Anarchy* magazine, and I did note his statement that he wouldn't personally choose to take legal action against it. However, his suggestion that such a tactic might sometimes be appropriate was wholly egregiously inappropriate. It is never appropriate to sic the agencies of the state on those people struggling against it. Doing so confers upon the state both legitimacy and license to suppress progressive activists. That is collaboration. The notion that justice is necessarily obtained through the courts, especially in disputes among people for whom they are part of the enemy apparatus is absurd and thus evidence of bad judgement. Sometimes it is not possible to obtain redress of a grievance in a principled manner and, hard and bitter though it may be, it must be swallowed. Such is the nature of life with big brother.

Knowing the people with whom we deal as well as possible is always important and is becoming ever more crucial as times become more dangerous and we learn to push our resources closer to their limit. Through such knowledge, we can avoid not only direct infiltration by overt agents but also the dissention and disruption attendant to accepting and relying on people prone to bad judgement, bad analysis and self-seeking opportunism. Given the diverse, mobile, and widely scattered nature of our movement, much of that knowledge will be predicated on information from other sources. Often it will be without the direct, personal interaction that can be such an aid in helping us "read" the subtleties of a person's theory and practice toward determining the degree of trust and extent of mutual struggle warranted.

Due to the power of such information, we must handle it carefully, like any other dangerous instrument. As Giddings notes, it is best to disseminate only documented instances of activist's wrongdoing. Next best are ones the disseminating party has personally verified through observation, admission, or accounts of witnesses, where documentation is unobtainable. As a general rule, it is a bad idea to pass on gratuitously vague, unsupported, second-hand dirt like, "So and so's no good," especially absent good reason to convey soft information. Mean spirited gossip or self-aggrandizement through bandying "bad-jackets" only sows dissention within and makes us look bad without.

This does not mean, however, that we must wait until there is proof positive that someone has committed crimes or other improprieties against the movement before calling his or her actions into question. We want real and de facto agents uncovered before they produce the evidence that convicts them. Similarly, would we like to expose

incompetents, opportunists, dillettants, etc? No one is perfect and everyone has done things worthy of criticism. Nevertheless, questions need to be raised when such actions become chronic. A lot of bits and pieces from disparate sources that might easily be brushed off can amount to a totality that reveals nefarious intent or result. Awareness of them can avoid serious consequences. When circumstances demand — and the necessity needs to be weighed against the results — such questions be raised, they should be raised in a clear, well reasoned, principled way.

It is incumbent on activists to avoid the appearance of impropriety, not only in defense of their own reputations and effectiveness, but also out of responsibility to their politics and the movement with which their actions are associated. We will not succeed in the struggle for the most equitable social reality as individuals or small groups and so must be conscious of how our actions are interpreted beyond our own milieus. For the same reasons, we must always be willing to respond to criticisms in a principled, clear and comradely manner, burden though it may be. Otherwise, they fester. Whoever said that making revolution would be easy. ∞

Arthur Miller Criticizes Bulldozer — He Does Not Support Michael Stotts

Arthur Miller of *Bayou La Rose* sent us a letter, which criticized Bulldozer on 2 grounds. To quote from the letter: "In the last two issues of your paper my name has come up by both sides in this Michael Stotts affair. I ask you why you printed my name in a way that seems as if I support Michael. Did anyone bother to read what I wrote? My letter that was printed in *Anarchy* said that I did not know him outside of the stuff his group sent me." Stotts did mention Arthur in his letter in PNS 31. But on the principle of giving Stotts a

chance to respond to Giddings' criticisms, we could not edit his letter to remove Miller's name, particularly since Stotts was giving it as a reference. Arthur's concern is that he will potentially be tarred with the same brush as Stotts. Indeed, Arthur tells of an experience where someone asked him if he "support(ed)" that snitch?"

Arthur thinks that being linked with Stotts will hurt his credibility within the prisons. But we think that Miller's reputation is solid enough that it won't be hurt by Stotts' attempt to make use of it. We would be amongst the first to come to Miller's defense if questions were raised about his work. It would be ironic if people who thought that Stotts was a snitch would turn around and believe him when he made it seem as though Miller was giving him support.

Miller ends his letter by asking that we "be much more careful in dealing with matters like this." He characterizes what has so far been presented about Stotts as "80% emotion, 15% rumors and about 5% possible reality." We agree with Arthur that accusations against informers or agents must be done with care. The more solid the better. But we trust Larry's judgment and don't think that he was simply just being "emotional" or responding to rumors. Even though he had no "hard evidence" when he wrote his article, he had investigated Stotts by talking about him with numerous prisoners. And what he heard from disparate sources was consistent enough to take the unusual step of making the charges public. What we've heard since then has only confirmed the charges against Stotts.

Since space is tight, we chose not to run all of Miller's letter, but we have presented his main complaint, that of printing his name in Stotts' letter. And his request that we be more careful. If there are questions, write to: Arthur Miller, POB 5464, Tacoma, WA 98405

For Stotts' and his supporters, write: PANAL, POB 4167 Halfmoon, NY 12065 or The Affiliate c/o Peter Ridden, 777 Barb Rd. Vankleek Hill, Ont K0B 1R0 ∞

Marionnotes

SAFE STY: The current BOP safety auditor (from FCI Danbury: they rotate to minimize whistle-blowing) visited Marion saying he didn't even know it had a cable factory til the day before (the fantasy of fire exit procedure was posted the day before, too). He nevertheless insisted the factory air conditioning system was completely different (no recirculation) than Marion's safety swine (recirculation). He was also adamant that EPA regulations mandate filtering the factory air before exhausting it, indicating the inside air quality violates outside air standards. With questions intensifying and Marion swine fluttering about unhappily, he broke for the door.

WARDEN SEZ: Since imposition of the lockdown almost eight years go, Marion prisoners have been belabored as "rotten apples", the "worst of the worst" and sundry other sorts of incorrigible nasties. This mythology justified forever lockdown of Marion. Suddenly enters new Prime Porker C. Allen Turner to declare on TV on 8/Aug/91 there is hope for even Marion prisoners. The Big Brother game apparently requires this alteration of official propaganda lest the locals became

less drooling sycophants of the prison and its purse. Of course, the head hog also says it will be business as usual, permanently nasty or not.

SPACE PEOPLE: Bureaucrats from the BOP regional office visited Marion on 9/July/91, their supposed mission to determine how to use space throughout the joint when Marion is no longer locked down. What to do with a lot of concrete boxes with bars was apparently difficult for them — the joint's only been here 28 years. Rumors left in their wake include that the present factory will be converted back to housing and the work moved back to the old factory buildings and that Marion may be double celled all or in part.

CASTLE CAPER: An artistically prolific prisoner in Marion's pre-transfer unit created a model castle, complete with flags and dragon, all made with approved materials, for an art contest. Surprisingly the castle was confiscated (without proper forms!) and the prisoner threatened with dire disciplinary action for his completely "legal" entry. Horrible accusations were made like that government staples had been used in the construction. Apparently, some official wanted this unique work and just gangstered it; the allegations and threats were just bluster to keep the prisoner from complaining about the theft. And these swine call prisoners nasty?

